FIRST REPORT | FIFTH SESSION | FORTIETH PARLIAMENT

Report on the Budget 2017 Consultations

Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

NOVEMBER 2016

November 14, 2016

To the Honourable
Legislative Assembly of the
Province of British Columbia

Honourable Members:

I have the honour to present herewith the First Report of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services for the Fifth Session of the 40th Parliament.

The Report covers the work of the Committee in regard to the Budget 2017 consultations, and was unanimously approved by the Committee.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee,

Wm. Scott Hamilton, MLA
Chair

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Composition of the Committee

Members

Wm. Scott Hamilton, MLA	Chair	Delta North
Carole James, MLA	Deputy Chair	Victoria-Beacon Hill
Dan Ashton, MLA		Penticton
Robin Austin, MLA		Skeena
Eric Foster, MLA		Vernon-Monashee
Simon Gibson, MLA		Abbotsford-Mission
George Heyman, MLA		Vancouver-Fairview
Jennifer Rice, MLA		North Coast
Jackie Tegart, MLA		Fraser-Nicola
John Yap, MLA		Richmond-Steveston

Committee Staff

Susan Sourial, Clerk Assistant, Committees and Interparliamentary Relations

Lisa Hill, Committee Research Analyst

Karan Riarh, Auxiliary Committee Researcher

Terms of Reference

On March 1, 2016, the Legislative Assembly agreed that the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services be empowered:

1. To examine, inquire into and make recommendations with respect to the budget consultation paper prepared by the Minister of Finance in accordance with section 2 of the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act [SBC 2000, c.23]* and, in particular, to:

    a. Conduct public consultations across British Columbia on proposals and recommendations regarding the provincial budget and fiscal policy for the coming fiscal year by any means the committee considers appropriate;
    b. Prepare a report no later than November 15, 2015 on the results of those consultations; and

2.
    a. To consider and make recommendations on the annual reports, rolling three-year service plans and budgets of the following statutory officers:
        i. Auditor General
        ii. Chief Electoral Officer
        iii. Conflict of Interest Commissioner
        iv. Information and Privacy Commissioner
        v. Merit Commissioner
        vi. Ombudsperson
        vii. Police Complaint Commissioner
        viii. Representative for Children and Youth; and

    b. To examine, inquire into and make recommendations with respect to other matters brought to the Committee's attention by any of the Officers listed in 2 (a) above.

3. To be the Committee referred to in the sections 19, 20, 21 and 23 of the *Auditor General Act, S.B.C. 2003, c. 2* and that the performance report in section 22 of the *Auditor General Act, S.B.C. 2003, c. 2*, be referred to the Committee.

In addition to the powers previously conferred upon the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, the Committee shall be empowered:

a. to appoint of their number one or more subcommittees and to refer to such subcommittees any of the matters referred to the Committee;
b. to sit during a period in which the House is adjourned, during the recess after prorogation until the next following Session and during any sitting of the House;
c. to adjourn from place to place as may be convenient; and
d. to retain personnel as required to assist the Committee,

and shall report to the House as soon as possible, or following any adjournment, or at the next following Session, as the case may be; to deposit the original of its reports with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly during a period of adjournment and upon resumption of the sittings of the House, the Chair shall present all reports to the Legislative Assembly.

Executive Summary

Public consultations on this year's provincial budget began on September 15, 2016 with the release of the "Budget 2017 Consultation" paper by the Minister of Finance. During the four week consultation period, the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (the "Committee") held 14 public hearings in locations around the province, including opportunities for witnesses to present to the Committee either in-person, via teleconference or videoconference/Skype. The Committee also invited written, video, and audio submissions, as well as responses to an online survey. In total, 705 submissions were received by the October 14, 2016 deadline for public input, including 236 public hearing presentations, 137 written and video submissions, and 332 survey responses. Submissions made to the Committee during the budget consultation process are available upon request from the Parliamentary Committees Office and the Hansard transcript of the public hearings is available on the Committee's website: www.leg.bc.ca/cmt/finance

14	137	332	236
Public Hearings	Written & Video Submissions	Online Survey Responses	Presentations to the Committee

This unanimous report summarizes key themes from the Committee's consultations, and makes 102 recommendations for Budget 2017.

As in previous years, British Columbians identified their high-level priorities, including: health care; funding for K-12 and advanced education; fiscal prudence and debt reduction; investment in the natural resource sector; preservation of our environment, including green initiatives and climate change; investment to support affordable housing; transit and transportation infrastructure; funding to support the arts and culture sector; and ensuring that vulnerable British Columbians have the supports and services they need. As Committee Members received a number of suggestions in the areas of housing and Indigenous peoples, they felt it was important to add two new sections in this year's report to more fully address the related recommendations.

The Committee wishes to thank the many British Columbians who participated in the consultation process and for their many contributions to this year's report.

In the area of health care, the Committee recommends improvements for community care and supports for seniors, general increases to health care funding, services and supports for those with brain injuries, physical disabilities and for those living with mental health or addictions-related challenges. Expanding the scope of practice for health care professionals, increasing the use of interdisciplinary teams, and wider promotion of healthy living and wellness, are additional recommendations.

The Committee makes recommendations regarding advanced education, including Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language and community literacy programs, as well as recommendations related to capital, operational and program funding. A needs-based student grant program should be established and the current student loans program needs to be reviewed.

On the topic of fiscal policy, the Committee recommends a focus on fiscal prudence and responsible budgeting, and makes recommendations related to the Carbon Tax, Property Transfer Tax and Provincial Sales Tax, as well as Medical Services Plan (MSP) premiums. The Committee also recommends changes related to credit unions and small business.

In the area of social services, the Committee recommends an affordable childcare plan and increased funding for child development and family supports, as well as employment training. The Committee also recommends increased awareness and support for those affected by domestic violence and sexual assault, better supports for youth transitions, increases to income and disability assistance rates and the creation of a poverty reduction strategy. K-12 Education is another area where the Committee makes a number of recommendations, including increases to capital and operational funding, and additional programming funding to support implementation of the new curriculum.

British Columbians have a great appreciation for the natural beauty that our province has to offer and B.C. parks, fish and wildlife conservation and management should be supported, and invasive species and noxious weeds controlled. Committee Members also recommend support for clean energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.

Affordable housing and the availability of rental accommodations are major areas of concern in this year's consultations. Another area of concern that was highlighted throughout the consultation is the need for better supports for Indigenous peoples. In response, Committee Members recommend improvements for Indigenous peoples related to advanced and K-12 education and training, arts and culture, public library services on reserve, and social services. The Committee makes a number of additional recommendations related to increases in funding for sport, culture and the arts, as well as public libraries. Improvements in the areas of natural

resources, agriculture and agri-food, fresh and saltwater fisheries, and the forestry industry, were other areas that caught the attention of Committee Members.

Finally, the Committee recommends support for more accessible transportation options, public transit, transportation infrastructure, as well as active transportation (cycling and walking). The Committee also recommends enhancements related to justice and correctional services, legal aid, and emergency preparedness.

Budget 2017 Consultation Process

By September 15 each year, pursuant to Section 2 of the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*, the Minister of Finance must publicly release a budget consultation paper. The paper must include a fiscal forecast, key issues to be addressed in the next provincial budget, and information on how members of the public may provide their views on those issues. Upon its release, the paper stands referred to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (the "Committee"). The Committee must conduct consultations as it considers appropriate, and publicly release a report on the results of those consultations, no later than November 15 each year.

Budget Consultation Paper

This year's paper, "Budget 2017 Consultation", was released on September 15 and outlined the B.C. government's plans for modest investments within a balanced budget framework. The paper identified housing affordability as a top priority, and outlined measures to help British Columbians in this regard, including those passed by the Legislative Assembly in July, 2016 as the *Miscellaneous Statutes (Housing Priority Initiatives) Amend*ment *Act, 2016*. The paper outlined infrastructure investments in schools, hospitals and transportation and provided information about lower taxes, new tax credits and changes to the Medical Services Plan premiums. Noting that an aging population and productivity influence future economic growth, the paper identified a need to plan for long-term fiscal sustainability. British Columbians were invited to participate in the consultations by responding to four questions on housing affordability, spending choices, economic growth and jobs, and priority areas. The survey questions and an analysis of responses are presented on pages 4 to 8.

Minister of Finance Briefing

Appearing before the Committee on September 19, 2016, the Minister of Finance, Hon. Michael de Jong, Q.C., MLA, discussed the budget consultation paper and first quarterly report for 2016/17. The budget for 2016/17 is forecast to have a surplus of over $1.9 billion, a significant increase from the $264 million surplus projected in February. This increase is largely the result of higher forecast income and property tax revenues at $1.1 billion and $965 million respectively. The fiscal plan also accounts for changes to the Medical Services Plan premium, such as the cancellation of a planned increase, and new housing affordability initiatives.

The Minister reported that B.C.'s economic outlook continues to be positive with the debt to GDP ratio trending downward, and employment growth forecast at 2.4 percent. The higher forecast level of personal income tax reflects more people coming to and working in B.C., and

earning more income. The operating debt is anticipated to be eliminated as part of the fiscal plan to be tabled next February.

Expressing concern about global economic conditions and their potential impact on trade, especially as it relates to softwood lumber, the Minister noted that trade with several Asian partners was down. The Minister concluded his presentation by discussing productivity issues and demographic challenges, and the implications for investment and labour supply in the long-run.

Consultation Methods

The Committee established a comprehensive consultation plan to engage British Columbians on Budget 2017, including a schedule of public hearings, a call for written, audio, or video submissions, and an online survey. Information on how to participate was publicized through the use of print advertisements, information provided online, and social media campaigns.

On August 12, 2016, the Committee issued a province-wide news release announcing the consultation plans and the locations of the public hearings. Newspaper advertisements were also placed in major provincial and community newspapers. A second province-wide news release was distributed on September 15, 2016 announcing the start of the consultation process with details on how British Columbians may participate.

The Legislative Assembly's social media accounts (Twitter and Facebook) were used to promote the work of the Committee, to encourage submissions, and to provide ongoing updates regarding public hearings. Facebook advertisements were also used to invite submissions and to promote the online survey.

Public Hearing Presentations

During the consultation period, the Committee held 14 public hearings in locations around the province, with opportunities for witnesses to make presentations either in-person, via teleconference, or using videoconference/Skype. The Committee had to cancel their scheduled public hearing in Dawson Creek due to inclement weather which prevented safe travel. Witnesses scheduled to appear in Dawson Creek were offered the opportunity to present via teleconference at the next scheduled public hearing in Prince George.

In total, the Committee heard 236 oral presentations from a broad range of individuals and organizations representing academic institutions, business and industry, community groups and non-profit agencies, local governments, sports organizations and other various sectors. The list of the presenters from the public hearings is available in Appendix A.

Written and Video Submissions

Over the course of the consultations, 137 written and video submissions were received. The names of all individuals and organizations that made a written or video submission are listed in Appendix B.

Online Survey Responses

The Budget 2017 Consultation paper asked British Columbians for suggestions to improve housing affordability and increase rental supply, and asked them to highlight the budget priorities they want government to consider. The budget consultation paper also sought input on initiatives to continue to grow the economy and sustain family-supporting jobs. British Columbians were also asked what they think government's priority area of spending should be in their region.

A total of 332 individuals and organizations completed the online survey.

The survey questions and graphical representations of the responses collected are provided on the following pages, as well as high-level analysis of suggestions put forward in the "Other" category for each question, as applicable. All of the online survey respondents are listed in Appendix C.

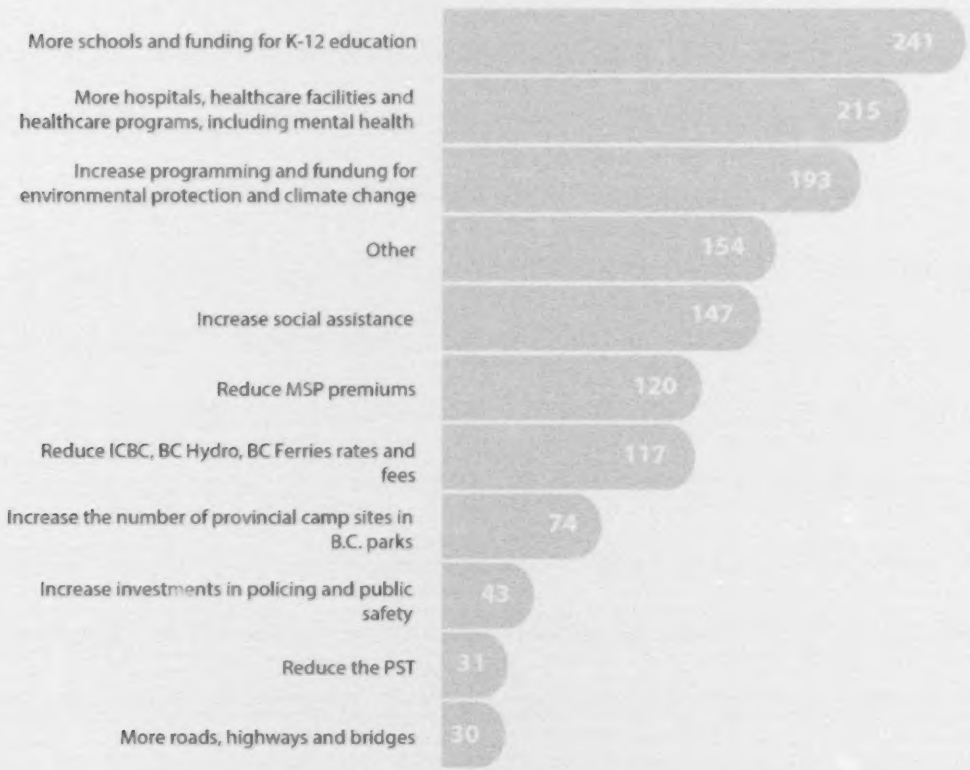
Budget 2017 Consultation Paper - Question 1: British Columbia has introduced comprehensive new measures to support housing affordability, including a new additional Property Transfer Tax and increased investment in housing starting in 2016-17. What further suggestions can government consider that will help make more affordable housing and rental supply within reach of more British Columbians? [Select all that apply]

Invest in programs that support housing access for seniors and vulnerable British Columbians
207
Incentives that support expanding supply of housing, rental and other shelter, as well as access to that supply
194
Smart transit expansion
175
Other
115
Enhancements to protect tenants
102
Incent developers to offer daycare space
96
More programs to help support first-time home buyers
92
Incent or lead streamlined and faster housing and rental development approval processes at all levels of government
89
Increase the Home Owner Grant
87
Increase protection for consumers engaged in real estate transactions
58

Responses received in the "**Other**" category support the options provided for selection in this question or highlighted other areas of concern, including:

- Restrict foreign ownership of local properties and foreign investments, prioritize B.C. residents for home ownership and provide more protection for landlords;
- Provide increases for social assistance, disability assistance rates, and the minimum wage;
- Eliminate the Property Transfer Tax (PTT); and
- Ensure adequate number of schools in areas where housing density is increasing.

Budget 2017 Consultation Paper Question 2: While our ongoing legislated commitment to a balanced budget means government will continue to make choices on behalf of British Columbians, we value the input of British Columbians in helping to make such choices. We have enjoyed steady economic growth, creating the revenue that now allows us to expand these choices. What are the priorities that you want government to consider? [Select all that apply]



Responses received in the "**Other**" category support the options provided for selection in this question or highlighted other areas of concern, including:

- Invest in more transit and cycling infrastructure;
- Provide more investment in arts and culture, as well as scientific research, education, and literacy;
- Provide funding to support families, including early intervention for children with special needs and affordable child care; and
- Implement changes to fiscal policies, including tax reform and old age security benefits.
- Address poverty by creating more affordable housing, raising the minimum wage or providing a guaranteed basic income.

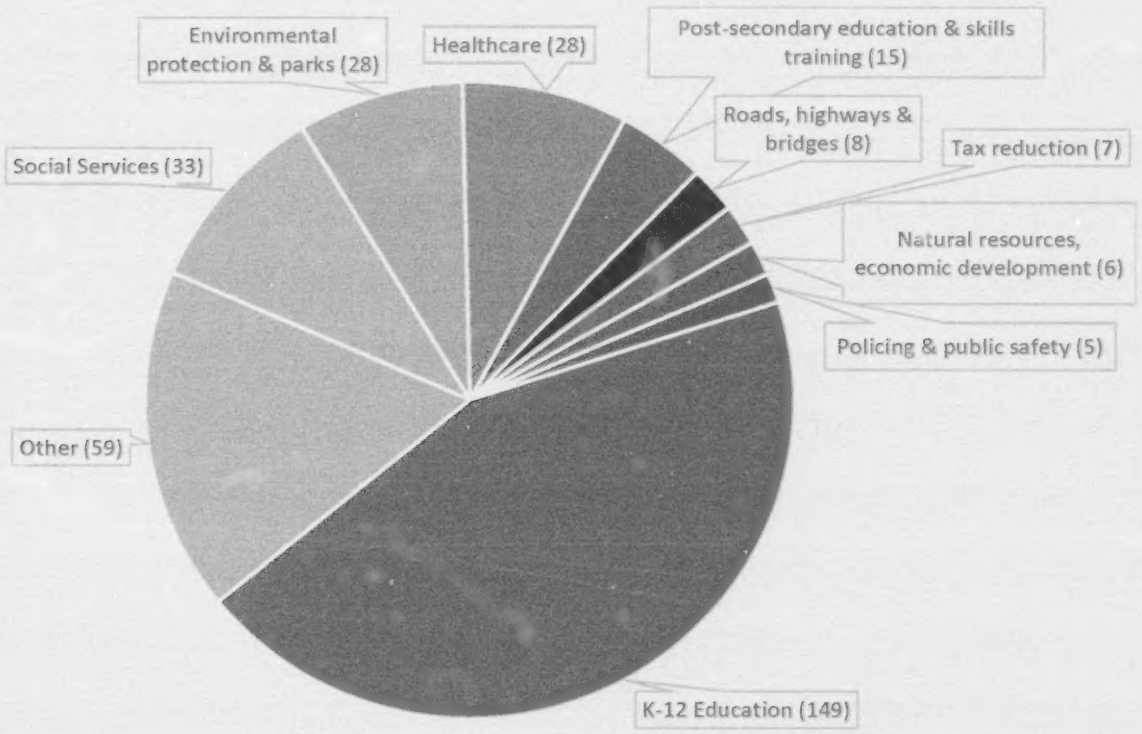
Budget 2017 Consultation Paper Question 3: With the BC Jobs Plan, government has continued to support the economy and job creation in this province. We have seen growth in tourism, the technology sector, transportation-related industries and across B.C. in a wide range of sectors. What further initiatives can we take to continue to grow the economy and sustain family-supporting jobs? [Select all that apply]

Increase funding for post-secondary education and skills training, and make post-secondary education more affordable (e.g. loans and grants)
236
Increase daycare assistance and access to daycare
211
Increase funding for programs such as the single parent employment initiative
118
Increase investments in small business
113
Other
104
Increase support for trades
80
Increase tax credits for apprentices
69
Increase investments in manufacturing
62
Continue work to reduce trade barriers and red tape
53

Responses received in the "**Other**" category support the options provided for selection in this question or highlighted other areas of concern, including:

- Provide investments to support the green economy, including the development of sustainable technologies and clean energy options;
- Increase funding for K-12 education to help support the future of B.C.'s economy;
- Increase funding for arts and culture;
- Look for ways to support local economies, increase the minimum wage or provide an annual basic income; and
- Increase investments in transportation, transit and cycling infrastructures.

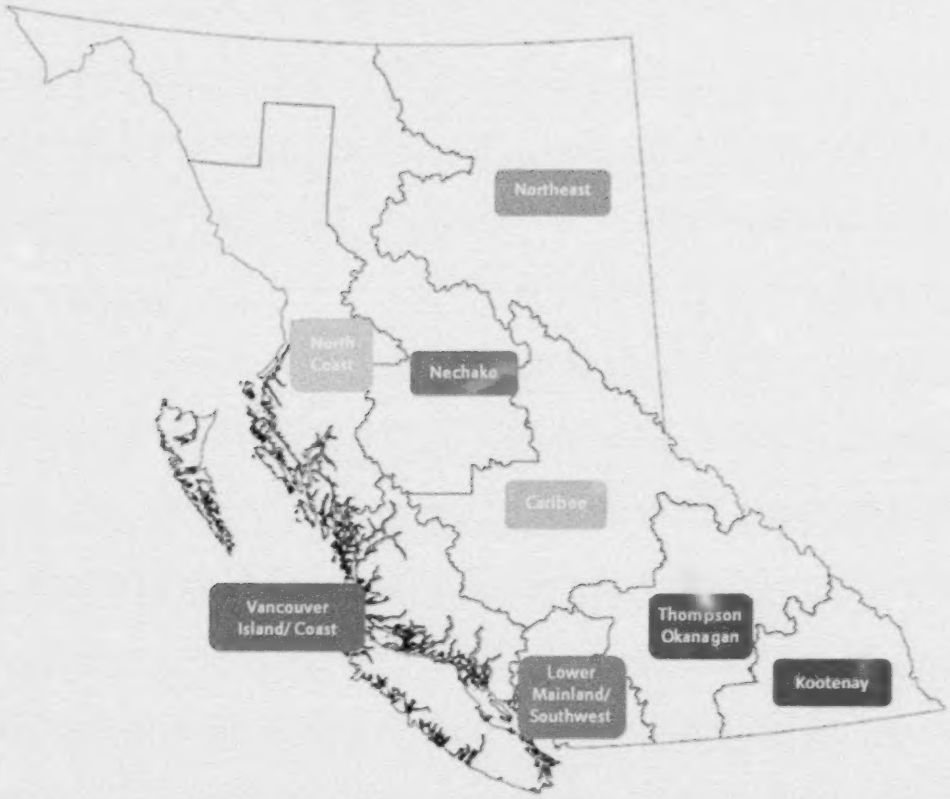
Budget 2017 Consultation Paper Question 4a: Given British Columbia's broad geography and society, representing diverse sectors, people and cultures, what should government's priority area of investment be in your region? [Select one]



Responses received in the "**Other**" category support the options provided for selection in this question or highlighted other areas of concern, including:

- Provide increased investments in public transit and infrastructure that supports active transportation, such as cycling;
- Look at ways to provide more affordable housing, including rentals and specific housing for seniors or vulnerable populations; and
- Increase funding for organizations that promote and support B.C.'s arts and culture sector.

Budget 2017 Consultation Paper Question 4b: Please identify your region [Select one]



Region	# of surveys
Lower Mainland/Southwest	194 (58%)
Vancouver Island/Coast	74 (22%)
Thompson Okanagan	38 (12%)
Kootenay	13 (4%)
Cariboo	5 (2%)
North Coast	4 (1%)
Northeast	3 (1%)
Nechako	1 (0%)

Meetings Schedule

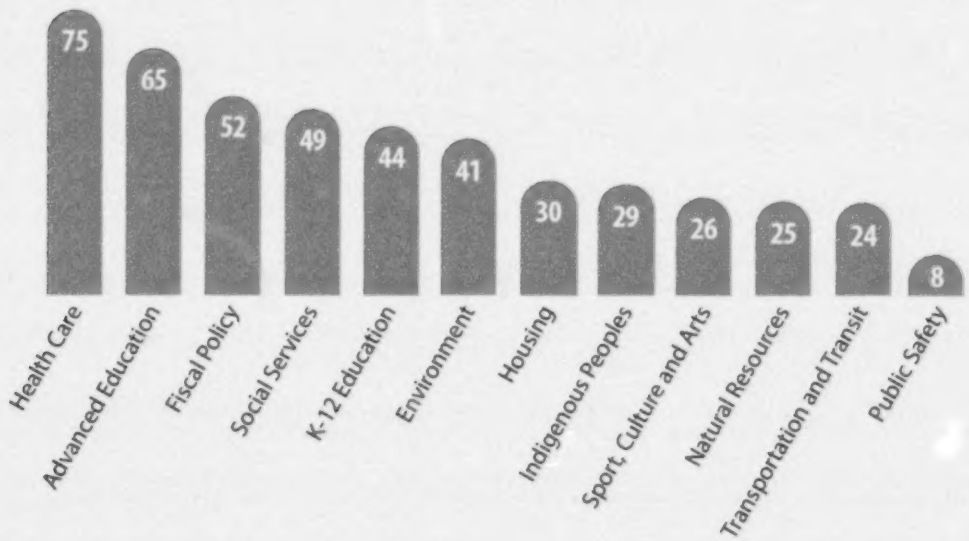
The Committee's consultations included 14 public hearings in locations around the province with opportunities for witnesses to make presentations either in-person, via teleconference, or by using videoconference technology or Skype.

Date	Type	Location
May 18, 2016	Planning Meeting	Victoria
September 19, 2016	Minister's Briefing; Public Hearing	Vancouver
September 20, 2016	Public Hearing	Cranbrook, Kamloops
September 21, 2016	Public Hearing	Kelowna, Richmond
September 22, 2016	Public Hearing	Surrey
September 26, 2016	Public Hearing (In-person presentations and tele/videoconference opportunities for: Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, Williams Lake, Smithers, Castlegar, Vernon, Terrace and Penticton)	Victoria
October 3, 2016	Public Hearing	Prince Rupert
October 4, 2016	Public Hearing (Teleconference opportunities for Dawson Creek)	Prince George
October 5, 2016	Public Hearing	Quesnel, Port Hardy
October 6, 2016	Public Hearing	Courtenay, Delta
October 11, 2016	Public Hearing (In-person presentations and tele/videoconference opportunities for: Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, Williams Lake, Smithers, Castlegar, Vernon, Terrace and Penticton)	Victoria
October 28, 2016	Deliberations	Victoria
October 31, 2016	Deliberations	Victoria
November 1, 2016	Deliberations	Victoria
November 3, 2016	Deliberations	Vancouver
November 9, 2016	Deliberations	Victoria
November 14, 2016	Deliberations; Adoption of Report	Victoria

Report Themes

The twelve themes highlighted within this report are ordered to reflect the areas of focus and priority, as determined by the number of suggestions and ideas received during the Committee's consultation process, as illustrated in the chart below.

A number of recommendations included in this report are ones that the Committee wishes to reiterate from budget consultation reports that relate to the 2015 and 2016 Budget Consultation processes. References to recommendations from previous years' reports are noted in parentheses at the end of each recommendation, including the year the report was released and the recommendation number.



Theme 1: Health Care

Health care was a predominant theme heard during the consultation process. When asked to suggest areas for government spending, health care was the second most frequently suggested priority in the online survey. Submissions related to health care covered a diversity of topics, and came from community service providers, health advocacy groups, health care provider organizations and individual British Columbians. The Committee received funding requests for community services, rural health care delivery, research and technology, and hospitals.

A number of submissions commented on particular aspects of the health care system such as community care, primary care or mental health. Some submissions drew linkages with other topics such as social services and education, and expressed the need for integrated services. As in previous years, preventative care and healthy living emerged as common themes.

Community Care and Seniors

Noting that an aging population necessitates a reorientation of the health care system towards community care where the needs of seniors, the chronically ill, the frail elderly and those with dementia can be more appropriately met, the BC Care Providers Association (BCCPA) called for more investment in community care – a request that was echoed by Save Our Northern Seniors and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. The BCCPA requested additional funding for home support, and long-term care and residential care facilities, including funding for direct care hours. The organization also asked for supports to improve quality of life for seniors, both in the community and in residential care. As an added benefit, community care typically has a lower cost, thus improving sustainability of the health care system.

Also in reference to B.C.'s aging population, the British Columbia Dental Association (BCDA) expressed concern about dental care for low-income seniors. Discussing the importance of oral care to overall health, they noted that as of 2015, 65 percent of seniors in the province were without health benefits, including dental coverage. To reduce barriers to access, the BCDA suggested the creation of a low-income seniors' dental plan modeled after the Healthy Kids Program, which provides basic dental care for children in low-income families. They further suggested the implementation of innovative practices, such as employing dental coordinators in long-term care facilities, to help frail seniors access dental care.

Funding

Twelve organizations sought additional funding for brain injury education, prevention and services. They outlined the impact on those who live with brain injuries and their families, and

the need to address regional inequities in the provision of services and supports. Proponents also advocated for an expansion of services and programming to include respite care, and increased support for rehabilitation and independent housing.

The BC Spinal Cord Injury Network (BC SCIN) outlined for the Committee how member organizations have successfully been collaborating to better support British Columbians with physical disabilities. BC SCIN expressed interest in continuing to leverage these partnerships but noted that they require additional funding support for spinal cord injury and disability organizations.

There are challenges related to health care delivery in rural B.C. The Fort Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce suggested increased funding would allow greater access to basic health care services in rural and remote communities, as well as funding for reliable medical evacuation (medevac) and air ambulance services. The BC Health Coalition proposed further investments for technology and other innovations that link rural British Columbians to specialist services in larger centres. Other submissions noted the importance of providing health care training in the north as statistics have demonstrated that physicians trained in northern regions, tend to stay in the north.

Other groups spoke about investing in health care research and technology more generally. These groups discussed the opportunities for improving patient outcomes as well as the economic potential of establishing a commercial health care innovation industry.

In relation to capital spending, residents and businesses from communities such as Richmond and Terrace provided submissions to the Committee seeking commitments to replace their local hospitals. The Pacific Academic Institute of Chiropractic presented their plans to develop a chiropractic research and education institute at Simon Fraser University, and asked for a capital grant to fund this new construction.

Health Care Providers

The Committee heard from several organizations representing a range of health care providers regarding opportunities for their respective members to expand their scope of practice as it relates to prescribing and referrals. Other organizations sought a multi-disciplinary approach within the primary care system, integrating care provided by health care professionals, such as chiropractors, physiotherapists, dietitians and others. They suggested that a multi-disciplinary approach could help improve outcomes for British Columbians to receive timely and appropriate care from the right provider.

Healthy Living and Wellness

Several organizations requested increased funding for health promotion and wellness, and preventative care. Some organizations spoke to food services provided in hospitals, health care facilities and schools, and the importance of ensuring meals are healthy and palatable. Some submissions outlined the benefits of promoting physical activity while others drew attention to vaccination, screening and testing. Proponents noted that investment in these areas can generate significant cost savings to the health care system by helping to reduce the risk of disease, or by helping to identify and address potential health issues earlier.

As in previous years, Committee Members heard concerns about the role of sugar-sweetened beverages in relation to increasing obesity rates in our population. Multiple organizations advocated for the application of a taxation policy to curb consumption and using the revenue generated from such a tax to fund health promotion initiatives.

Mental Health and Addictions

In any given year, one in five Canadians experiences a mental health or addiction problem, and 70 percent of mental health problems have their onset during childhood or adolescence. The Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division (CMHA BC) and several other organizations advocated for strengthening investments across the spectrum of mental health and addiction services, including prevention and early intervention, home and community supports, and transition services. The Committee also heard that education, social and health agencies need to work together to provide a model of care that better supports British Columbians affected by mental illness and their families.

Conclusions

Committee Members recognized the need to make appropriate investments in community care to support seniors in their own homes, and in long-term care and residential care facilities.

Community-based health organizations provide much-needed services to British Columbians, and Committee Members endorse a stronger suite of programming, services and supports in their communities.

The Committee was interested to hear ideas regarding improvements to the primary care system through integrated, multi-disciplinary teams, as well as through expanded scopes of practice for health care professionals. Committee Members appreciate the unique health care challenges of rural and remote communities and agreed about the need for adequate funding

to allow for more local services, as well as investment in innovative options that connect these communities to additional services.

Noting that investments in wellness and preventative care can help alleviate future demands on our health care system, Committee Members expressed support for programs and initiatives that work to promote healthy living. This included support for a tax policy on sugar-sweetened beverages as a means to address obesity and fund health promotion programming. The Committee would also like to see the Human Papillomavirus vaccination program expanded to all eligible youth and investment in universal baseline testing for prostate cancer. Lastly, Members reiterated their support for increasing mental health and addiction services and supports, especially as they relate to children and youth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Community Care and Seniors

1. Establish a long-term, predictable funding model that includes training and education to improve dementia care, and funding for 3.36 direct care hours per resident as a standard for all facilities.
2. Increase supports available to improve quality of life for seniors in long-term care, such as dental care and programs that support mental, physical, spiritual and emotional well-being.
3. Expand home care programs and services, such as home visits, meal delivery and community care, to allow seniors to remain in their homes longer.
4. Expand support and funding for a broad range of hospice care and bereavement programs to ensure that these services are available to British Columbians and their families. (2015: #22)
5. Establish a dental care plan for low-income seniors and people receiving income assistance, similar to the Healthy Kids Program (for low-income families).

Funding

6. Ensure adequate funding is directed to rural, remote and isolated communities to allow greater access to local supports, such as midwives and nurse practitioners. (2014: #16)

7. Increase investment in technology, training and resources to expand video and telecommunications services to provide virtual options to link patients in remote, rural and isolated communities with health care providers in larger centres.
8. Provide additional funding for provincial spinal cord injury and disability organizations to continue supporting British Columbians with physical disabilities.
9. Increase investment in health data research and life sciences to support health care innovation, maximize value, and improve patient health outcomes.
10. Increase funding for community-based brain injury associations and organizations to facilitate public education, prevention, as well as coordinated services and support for those living with brain injuries and their families.

Health Care Providers

11. Expand the scope of practice for health care professionals and create a multi-disciplinary team approach, including (but not limited to): nurse practitioners, chiropractors, optometrists, physiotherapists, dietitians and pharmacists.

Healthy Living and Wellness

12. Increase investment in initiatives that promote healthy living for British Columbians and provide multi-year funding to enable effective and collaborative health promotion programs between non-profit organizations and provincial health authorities.
13. Review the provision of food services in hospitals and other health care facilities to ensure that healthier and more palatable options are made available to patients.
14. Extend the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) to cover all sugar-sweetened beverages or introduce an excise tax on sugar-sweetened beverages and use a portion of this revenue to fund health promotion. (2014: #19 and 2015: #27)
15. Expand the publicly-funded, school-based Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination program to all eligible youth. (2015: #23)
16. Invest in a program to provide universal baseline testing for prostate cancer to help raise awareness and improve health outcomes.

Mental Health and Addictions

17. Provide increased services and support for British Columbians with mental health and addictions-related challenges, including effective, evidence-based prevention and models of care, as well as early identification, intervention and support for those transitioning into the workforce. (2015: #25)

Theme 2: Advanced Education

Post-secondary education and skills training was the most commonly selected response to Question 3 of the online survey regarding initiatives for growing the economy and sustaining family-supporting jobs. The Committee also received a large number of submissions on advanced education from post-secondary institutions, student unions, literacy organizations, faculty associations, and community groups.

As in previous years, the Committee received a number of requests for increased support for Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL) and literacy programs. Presenters also reiterated requests for reviews of the post-secondary education funding model and student financial assistance. Several student unions brought attention to housing issues and shared their suggestions to help increase the supply of student housing. Committee Members also heard from post-secondary institutions and industry representatives about program areas requiring additional investment to meet current and future demands for the job market.

ABE, ESL and Literacy

From adult literacy organizations to faculty associations to student unions and others, many organizations advocated for the reinstatement of tuition-free ABE and ESL programs, and for ongoing funding for community literacy programs.

The Selkirk College Students' Union outlined how ABE programs help British Columbians advance their learning and employment prospects, by allowing them to either complete high school, support retraining programs or help them to meet prerequisites for higher education programs. Proponents of tuition-free ABE and ESL programs believe that tuition fees are a barrier to access, and noted that ABE students often come from low-income households. While grants exist, income thresholds remain too high, which makes many applicants ineligible. The Vancouver Community College Faculty Association drew attention to the connection between ABE and ESL, noting that many ABE students start out in ESL programs, and then transition to ABE once their English literacy skills have improved.

Community literacy organizations expressed appreciation for the funding and support they currently receive; however, they expressed challenges in providing appropriate programming without the certainty and stability of multi-year funding. The Downtown Eastside Adult Literacy Association further revealed that literacy programming is evolving to include a focus on technology and employment and noted that literacy organizations are also increasingly acting as community navigators for individuals trying to access government services.

British Columbians and the province receive a significant economic and social return on investment by supporting ABE, ESL, and literacy programs. Students in these programs tend to improve their knowledge and skills, which in turn helps them sustain employment, provide for their families, and participate more fully in their communities.

Capital Funding

The Committee heard repeatedly about the need for additional student housing. Many submissions requested that post-secondary institutions be permitted to take on debt in order to build more student housing. The Alliance of BC Students, a provincial student advocacy group representing 40,000 students, explained that debt for student housing would be fully serviced by the students who will be living in these accommodations. Student unions further noted that the lack of growth in student residence spaces has resulted in an increased number of students entering local rental markets, which further exacerbates the existing demand on those markets and also adds to the financial burden on students.

Requests for additional capital funding for post-secondary institutions centred on improving areas such as routine and deferred maintenance, the replacement and renewal of aging infrastructure and support for information technology investments.

Operational and Program Funding

As in previous years, the Committee heard many requests for increases to operational funding. Post-secondary institutions, faculty associations, and student societies all spoke on the limitations of the current funding formula, and the perceived inadequacy of current funding levels. Organizations suggested a review of the formula to ensure it addresses the financial pressures faced by post-secondary institutions, and to ensure that funding allocations account for regional inequities.

Representatives from business and industry, as well as post-secondary institutions, requested increased investment in engineering and technology education, citing labour market demand. Physiotherapists for Northern Communities, an organization advancing access to rehabilitation services in northern communities, sought an increased number of seats for the University of British Columbia's Masters of Physical Therapy program. They suggested creating a dedicated cohort for northern B.C. to address demand for physiotherapy services in that region.

Tuition and Financial Assistance

A significant portion of students from lower- and middle-income families obtain student loans to pay for their education, and end up with large debts upon graduation. Lowering or

eliminating interest on student loans is a means to help alleviate this burden as is providing non-repayable financial support for students, such as grants. The University of Victoria Students' Society noted that B.C. is the only province without a needs-based grants program and that B.C. students receive the lowest proportion of non-repayable student assistance in the country.

The Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia stated that graduate students perform valuable research at post-secondary institutions and contribute to a highly-skilled labour market. It was their view that B.C. is at risk of losing potential graduate students to provinces offering better scholarship funding and other financial supports.

Conclusions

Committee Members recognized the importance of making ABE and ESL programs tuition-free, and expressed appreciation for the valuable work done by community literacy organizations. Investment in these areas has clear economic and social benefits for our province, and British Columbians and their communities. The Committee recommended reinstatement of tuition-free ABE and ESL programs, and a commitment to stable, multi-year funding for literacy programs.

Post-secondary institutions should be permitted to explore self-financing for capital projects, especially as it relates to student housing, given the model of self-supporting debt. The Committee reiterated a recommendation from their 2015 report to establish a needs-based student grant program, and review student loan eligibility and interest rates. Also consistent with 2015 recommendations, the Committee suggested increasing operational grants and moving to multi-year allotments. Committee Members also put forth a recommendation to increase funding for programs with identified gaps or demand in the labour market.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

ABE, ESL and Literacy

18. Reinstate tuition-free English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE) and adult special education programs. (2014: #32 and 2015: #4)
19. Provide stable and predictable multi-year funding for coordinated community literacy programs and services. (2014: #46 and 2015: #10)

Capital Funding

20. Develop a solution to enable post-secondary institutions to finance self-supported capital projects, including student residences and housing. (2014: #31 and 2015: #7)

Operational and Program Funding

21. Increase operating grants to post-secondary institutions to address unfunded cost pressures and move to multi-year allotments for operating grants and deferred maintenance grants to help these institutions with their financial planning. (2014: #27, #28 and 2015: #11)

22. Increase funding for programs to address areas with identified skills gaps in the workforce, such as physical therapy, engineering and technology and applied research.

Tuition and Financial Assistance

23. Establish a needs-based student grant program that addresses student needs and provides incentives for completion and conduct a review of the current B.C. student loan eligibility requirements and interest charged on B.C. student loans. (2014: #34, #35 and 2015: #13)

Theme 3: Fiscal Policy

Various organizations and individuals made submissions and presentations to the Committee related to general fiscal policy and in particular, focussed on the Carbon Tax, credit unions, the Property Transfer Tax, the Provincial Sales Tax, and Medical Services Plan premiums.

In his presentation to the Committee on Sept. 19, 2016 in Vancouver, the Minister of Finance outlined the current economic status of British Columbia and spoke about his government's plans for modest investments within a balanced budget framework. (See Finance Minister's Briefing section on page 1)

Balanced Budgets and Debt Reduction

In their submissions to the Committee, British Columbians highlighted the need to maintain fiscal prudence in terms of balanced budgets, and an ongoing focus on responsible debt reduction. They support ongoing efforts to reduce provincial debt while maintaining a balanced budget and want this to continue in the fiscal year ahead. British Columbia has weathered recent fiscal challenges admirably and the province is seen as an economic leader in our country. Ensuring the debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio is within reasonable limits is one way to continue a focus on prosperity to benefit all British Columbians. The Business Council of British Columbia, BC Chamber of Commerce and Canadian Taxpayers Federation, among others, all provided submissions on this topic.

Carbon Tax

The original intention of the Carbon Tax was to incent industries, corporations and sectors to look for ways to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The David Suzuki Foundation, the Mining Association of British Columbia, Teck Resources Limited and the Cement Association of Canada were among those organizations who made submissions with differing suggestions for changes to the application of the tax. In recognition of the various viewpoints, the Committee determined that the best course of action would be a periodic review of the Carbon Tax to ensure it functions in relation to its intended purpose.

Credit Unions

Representatives from credit unions again this year asked for the removal of the capital penalty that is applied to credit unions if more than 30 percent of their portfolio is comprised of business loans, and to make the temporary deferment of the preferential tax rate permanent.

This would allow credit unions to have more capital available to lend to local small businesses in their communities, thus improving the general economic outlook.

Medical Services Plan

The BC Health Coalition, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, BC Office and Canadian Taxpayers Federation were among those who suggested that government might undertake a fulsome review of various mechanisms for health care funding in Canada and other jurisdictions to look for alternative ideas. The current system of Medical Services Plan (MSP) premiums could be eliminated altogether and replaced with small increases to personal income tax or by a combination of increases and changes to personal income tax and business taxes.

Property Transfer Tax

The Property Transfer Tax (PTT) was a topic of interest for many. The British Columbia Real Estate Association, Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver, Victoria Real Estate Board and Canadian Home Builders' Association of BC all suggested a review of the PTT rates and exemptions to see if opportunities might exist to encourage British Columbians, particularly first-time homebuyers, to enter the housing market. While a variety of potential threshold amounts and formulae related to the calculation of the PTT were presented, there was a unified message regarding the need to reflect current market conditions.

Provincial Sales Tax

The Business Council of British Columbia, Fort Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce, and the Mining Association of British Columbia all spoke to the application of the Provincial Sales Tax (PST). The Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition suggested that e-bikes (electric-assist bicycles) be exempted from the PST to encourage British Columbians to pursue active forms of transportation to stay healthy and to commute in environmentally-friendly ways.

Small Business

Small business owners have an important role to play in stimulating the economy, creating jobs and working to ensure the viability of communities throughout the province. The Committee heard that a review of the small business tax rate should be undertaken to ensure it is applied fairly and that it does not adversely affect small businesses. Government's procurement policy is seen as an area where improvements for small businesses might be considered so that small businesses may have more opportunities to participate in the bidding process for government contracts or RFPs (Request for Proposals).

Conclusions

Many of the submissions echo government's stated priorities for a balanced budget framework and a reduction of debt over time. Committee Members reiterated their 2014 and 2015 recommendations to support this focus on fiscal prudence and responsible budgeting, while ensuring that the debt to GDP ratio is within reasonable limits. As the application of the Carbon Tax is complex and there are many differing viewpoints, Committee Members suggested that periodic reviews of the tax be undertaken to ensure that any impacts on emission-intensive or trade-exposed sectors or industries are mitigated as much as possible, as well as to ensure its continued effectiveness in reducing emissions.

Committee Members commented that past risk factors regarding credit union lending has changed. This, and the input received from a number of credit union organizations, led the Committee to reiterate their recommendations from 2014 and 2015 that government should remove the current capital penalty on credit unions and make the temporary deferment of the preferential tax rate permanent. The Committee wants to ensure that their recommendation be restricted to B.C.-based credit unions and B.C.-based operations of national credit union organizations.

The Medical Services Plan (MSP) and associated premiums is an area where the Committee would like to see government conduct a fulsome review of health care funding in other jurisdictions in order to look for alternative models.

The Committee discussed the Property Transfer Tax (PTT) and determined that their previous recommendations from 2014 and 2015 to encourage government to look for ways to improve the current options available to those first entering the real estate market should stand. Other than to recommend that e-bikes be excluded from the PST, the Committee preferred not to make any recommendations this year regarding the Provincial Sales Tax as the B.C. Commission on Tax Competitiveness is due to release its findings by Nov. 15, 2016.

Small business owners have positive economic and social impacts in their communities. The Committee expressed their desire to provide support for small business owners through fairness in the tax system and to ensure that small business owners have the opportunities to provide input on government policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Balanced Budgets and Debt Reduction

24. Focus on fiscal prudence and responsible budgeting, while ensuring that the debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio is within reasonable limits. (2014: #1, 2 and 2015: #14)

Carbon Tax

25. Conduct periodic reviews of the application of the Carbon Tax, including identifying opportunities to mitigate any impact(s) on emission-intensive or trade-exposed sectors and industries, as well as its continued effectiveness in reducing emissions.

Credit Unions

26. Remove the 30 percent capital penalty on credit unions (both B.C.-based credit unions and B.C.-based operations of national credit unions) and make the temporary deferment of the preferential provincial tax rate permanent. (2014: #7 and 2015: #16)

Medical Services Plan

27. Conduct a review of other jurisdictions in order to determine alternative models for the Medical Services Plan (MSP) premium system. (2015: #24)

Property Transfer Tax

28. Review Property Transfer Tax (PTT) rates and exemptions to provide better opportunities for home ownership and in particular, for first-time homebuyers. (2014: #6 and 2015: #17)

Provincial Sales Tax

29. Exempt e-bikes (electric-assist bicycles) from the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) to encourage British Columbians to pursue active forms of transportation.

Small Business

30. Maintain a competitive corporate income tax rate and conduct a review of the small business tax rate.

31. Examine current public sector procurement policies to look for opportunities for a greater number of small businesses and companies to participate in the Request for Proposal (RFP) or bidding process.

Theme 4: Social Services

As in previous years, the Committee received a large and diverse number of submissions on the theme of social services, reflecting the complexity of this topic area.

Highlighted areas for improvement include: the need for affordable child care and child development services to support families; increases to income and disability assistance rates; measures to address poverty, youth transition and domestic violence and sexual assault; and employment training, labour and immigration.

Affordable Child Care, Child Development and Family Supports

Organizations such as the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC, Early Childhood Educators of BC and Greater Victoria Regional Child Care Council, all advocated for an affordable, accessible and high-quality child care plan for B.C. to provide much-needed assistance to working families. The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and the BC Healthy Living Alliance suggested further measures to pro-rate child care cost according to family income and waive child care fees for low-income families or those living below the poverty line.

The British Columbia Association for Child Development and Intervention, Shuswap Children's Association, and Infant and Child Development Association of B.C., among others, suggested increased investment in child development and early intervention programs provided through the Ministry of Children and Families and their contracted agencies. This increased funding would help ensure that adequate services, including early childhood educators, are available for children, including those with special needs.

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Despite increased public education and awareness campaigns, domestic violence and sexual assault continue to affect communities, families and individuals. Many dedicated organizations, such as the Comox Valley Transition Society, Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter and the Ending Violence Association of B.C., work tirelessly to provide assistance and support to those affected by domestic violence and sexual assault and to provide public education and awareness through a variety of forums, including social media. The role that safe or transition houses, crisis centres and campus organizations play in making inroads to eradicate domestic violence and sexual assault cannot be understated. Many of these organizations function on a limited budget with a great reliance on volunteers to perform outreach activities.

Employment Training, Labour and Immigration

On the topic of employment in B.C., common threads put forth by the Nanaimo Youth Services Association, Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC, and BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, focused on (re)training programs, immigration, locally-focused hiring plans and recruitment of skilled workers. Ideas to increase training and employment-readiness opportunities for the under-employed and those who might face additional challenges to secure employment included the development of a technology workforce resource centre and the creation of an experiential learning model to develop improved digital literacy skills for those seeking to enter the workforce. The BC Federation of Labour outlined their suggestion to provide support to skilled workers who feel the impact of the transition to a green economy from other sectors.

The Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce suggested that the provincial government could work more closely with their federal counterparts to make the already-established Provincial Nominee Program and Labour Market Impact Assessment process more effective and streamlined to allow employers quicker access to skilled employees looking to immigrate to B.C. with a confirmed job offer.

Income and Disability Assistance Rates

The current income and disability assistance rates should be examined and increases considered to reflect the true cost of living in B.C., including the high cost of housing and rental accommodations, and to index the rates to inflation. The Committee heard that the current rates are not enough for people to live on and this can cause undue hardship for those who may already face multiple barriers to inclusion and participation in their communities.

Stating that the practice of deducting Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefits from monthly income and disability assistance payments is unfair, a number of individuals and groups requested that this monthly calculation be reconsidered.

Poverty Reduction

The root causes of poverty are multi-faceted and the impacts on our society are also complex. Poverty reduction requires a collaborative approach from a multitude of stakeholders. The Committee heard about the costs and impacts of systemic poverty, including increased policing and health care costs, additional cost pressures on social services, as well as the mental, physical and emotional cost borne by families, children and our society's most vulnerable citizens. First Call: BC Child & Youth Advocacy Coalition, BC Healthy Living Alliance, Board of Education,

School District No. 39 (Vancouver) and Central Okanagan Food Policy Council were some of the organizations requesting action to address poverty and homelessness.

Youth Transition

Services to support youth as they transition out of foster care or into Community Living BC from the Ministry of Children and Family Development are crucial at that point in a young person's life.

While the recent extension of the age requirement for foster care is seen as a positive step by many presenters, the Committee heard that there is still much work to be done to provide appropriate supports and services to enable successful transitions for youth. These may include financial, educational and relational programs and services, among other services and supports. Many organizations noted that providing funding now for youth transition services can produce savings in the long term due to a reduced dependence on social services and assistance, as well as in relation to health care and other costs.

Conclusions

As in previous years, the Committee received a significant number of submissions on the topics of social services, poverty, childcare and employment. Committee Members emphasized government's role in improving the lives of children, youth, families, and others who might face multiple barriers to employment, housing, and a sense of stability in life. Committee Members restated their 2014 and 2015 recommendations calling for a fulsome and integrated poverty reduction and homelessness strategy, with the inclusion of legislated timelines and targets.

Domestic violence and sexual assault crimes often have a devastating impact on families or an individual's quality of life. The Committee reiterated their 2015 recommendation to increase funding to provide more education, services and support for those affected by domestic violence and sexual assault. Acknowledging that children are one of our most important assets, the Committee agreed to reiterate their recommendations from 2014 and 2015, calling for the development of an affordable, accessible and high-quality childcare plan.

The Committee discussed the current practice of deducting Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefits from disability and income assistance monthly payments. As a person might work for many years to accumulate those benefits, Committee Members questioned whether this is a fair practice and their recommendation reflects a more equitable approach to consider CPP benefits as earned income.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Affordable Child Care, Child Development and Family Supports

32. Increase supports and services, including ministry staff and programs provided through the Ministry of Children and Family Development and contracted agencies, to assist vulnerable populations, including children and youth.

33. Invest more in early intervention/development programs and early childhood educators to assist children and youth, including those with special needs and their families.

34. Provide funding and support for the development and implementation of an affordable, accessible and high-quality childcare plan. (2014: #40 and 2015: #34)

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

35. Increase funding for transition houses, crisis centres and student organizations that provide education, services and support for those who are affected by domestic violence and sexual assault. (2015: #38)

Employment Training, Labour and Immigration

36. Partner with and build on the work carried out by community organizations who provide assistance and training to support the under-employed and those who face additional challenges.

37. Work with the federal government to make the Provincial Nominee Program more effective by educating business owners on the process, reducing processing times, and by awarding points for having a confirmed job offer.

38. Work with the federal government to review the requirement of a Labour Market Impact Assessment and to allow transferability of allotments between provinces.

39. Provide support for those sectors transitioning to a green economy through an increased focus on immigration, (re)training programs, locally-focused hiring plans, and the recruitment of skilled workers.

Income and Disability Assistance Rates

40. Review current income assistance and disability (PWD) rates and consider increases to reflect the cost of living in B.C., including an examination of the provincial housing and rental accommodation cost differentials. (2014: #37, 38 and 2015: #39)

41. Recognize Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefits as earned income for those accessing disability and income assistance.

Poverty Reduction

42. Develop a comprehensive and integrated poverty reduction strategy, including legislated timelines and targets for the reduction of poverty (including child poverty) and homelessness in B.C. (2014: #37 and 2015: #42)

Youth Transition

43. Enhance and extend financial, educational, and relational programs and services to support youth transitioning out of foster care up to the age of 25 years old.

44. Allocate sufficient funds for supports and services to meet the needs of young adults who are turning 19 and transitioning from the Ministry of Children and Family Development to Community Living BC.

Theme 5: K-12 Education

The Committee received over 40 submissions on K-12 education. Question Two asked respondents to select areas for government spending - more schools and funding for K-12 education was the most commonly-selected option. In response to Question Four, the largest proportion of respondents chose K-12 education when asked to select one priority area for investment.

As in previous years, concerns regarding capital and operational funding, including issues related to adequacy, predictability and allocation of funding, were raised by numerous groups. Support and resources for the new curriculum emerged as an additional area of interest during the consultation period.

Capital Funding

The Committee heard about the need for adequate and timely capital funding for public schools. Three priorities were identified: aging schools, seismically at-risk schools and ongoing maintenance. Specific areas, such as Surrey and the Peace River District, are experiencing significant growth and require new schools to keep up with enrollment requirements. Surrey Students Now, a grassroots parent organization, drew specific attention to the thousands of students in Surrey who are regularly housed in portables. The group would like government to reconsider accounting methods whereby portables are included in operational budgets, rather than capital budgets.

The Board of Education for School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast) emphasized the need for predictable, multi-year funding for capital projects. They explained that the present system for capital funding is unclear and creates uncertainty. They believe that in providing predictable, multi-year funding, school boards can better plan for and implement capital improvements in a more efficient manner.

Support Summerland Schools, a community-based advocacy organization, presented ideas to use school space with the goals of cost savings and generating income. They provided examples such as using schools as neighbourhood learning centres and moving school board offices into under-capacity schools to save money and benefit the community.

Operational Funding

As in previous years, many submissions asserted that current funding is insufficient to meet the mandate of school boards and the needs of students. As with capital funding, several school boards stressed the importance of predictability and shared that the timing and number of recent funding allocations does not allow for sufficient planning.

Many school boards, parents and organizations such as the British Columbia Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association, further recommended a full review of the current funding formula. The Committee heard that the current funding formula does not reflect the true cost of delivering public education, nor does it account for the diversity of education needs across the province. The Boards of Education for School District No. 57 (Prince George) and School District No. 60 (Peace River North), as well as the Vancouver Island North Teachers' Association and the Prince George District Teachers' Association, spoke specifically to public education delivery in rural B.C. They stressed that public education funding needs to be more equitable, and account for differences between urban and rural schools. As an example, they highlighted the distance many rural students have to travel to attend school and the necessity for transportation services.

The Committee also received submissions to increase funding for: more teachers, including specialist teachers such as librarians, learning assistance teachers and music teachers; students with special needs and English-as-a-second language learners; and student support and enrichment services (especially for vulnerable students).

Programming

The new curriculum received support from those who discussed it; however, they felt that support and resources to effectively implement the curriculum are lacking. The British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF), an organization which represents public school teachers, described the complexity associated with teaching the new curriculum. Specifically, teachers may need to adjust practice, develop additional competencies, and acquire relevant resources and knowledge. As a result, additional funding and time is needed to support the transition. Moreover, the BCTF pointed out that the new curriculum's focus on hands-on and project learning necessitates the provision of materials such as lab equipment, computer and technology equipment, and other classroom supplies and teaching materials.

Conclusions

The Committee acknowledged the need for predictable, stable and adequate funding for K-12 education, and a need for a review of the current funding formula. The Committee repeated recommendations from their 2015 report in relation to capital and operational funding for K-12 education. The Committee further recommended increased supports and services for vulnerable students and students with special needs.

Many innovative suggestions were made on how to best use public school infrastructure. There are opportunities to better leverage this infrastructure to the benefit of the school system and the community.

The Committee was pleased to hear positive reviews regarding the new curriculum from parents, teachers and school boards. They also recognize the challenges associated with implementation, and support increased funding for additional resources to facilitate this transition.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Capital Funding

45. Provide adequate capital funding to urban and rural school districts for facility improvements, seismic upgrades and additional schools in rapidly-growing communities. (2014: #23 and 2015: #1)
46. Recognize portables as a capital expense for school districts, rather than as an operating expense.
47. Partner with local organizations to utilize education-related infrastructure when classrooms are not in use and to incorporate school board offices in under-capacity schools.

Operational Funding

48. Address inequities in the Ministry of Education funding formula, including discrepancies in the programs and services offered in rural or urban communities, as well as in administrative staff compensation levels. (2015: #3)
49. Provide predictable, sustainable and adequate yearly funding to enable school districts to fulfil their responsibility to continue to provide access to quality public education,

with recognition of the increased costs that school districts have incurred. (2014: #22 and 2015: #2)

50. Increase funding to provide services and supports for vulnerable students and students with special needs and develop a more equitable distribution process of this funding.

Programming

51. Fund additional support and resources to implement the new curriculum.

Theme 6: Environment

Many of the submissions this year on the environment were focused on increased funding for government agencies and community organizations which are responsible for the province's parks, and fish and wildlife conservation. As in previous years, a number of organizations suggested the control of invasive species and noxious weeds.

The Committee received an array of suggestions in reference to the clean and renewable energy industry, the mitigation of climate change impacts, and the management of greenhouse gas emissions. Environmental protection and climate was also the third most common selection for Question Two in the online survey, which asked respondents to select areas for government spending.

BC Parks

Committee Members heard that BC Parks has insufficient funding to adequately staff and maintain provincial parks. As a result, British Columbians and other visitors are unable to fully enjoy the natural beauty that the parks have to offer.

All the submissions on this topic called for increases to the operational and capital budgets for BC Parks. The Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC noted that making this investment is critical to improving the state of provincial parks, and maximizing the economic and health benefits both the province and visitors receive from the use of B.C.'s parks.

The Committee also heard submissions regarding campsites and the campsite reservation system. While the province has had a lot of success marketing B.C.'s outdoor opportunities, this success has also led to demand exceeding the supply of available campsites. The supply of campsites should be increased and government should continue to review the reservation system to ensure residents and visitors can reserve campsites in a fair and equitable manner.

Clean Energy and Climate Change

Proponents outlined the environmental and economic benefits of clean and renewable energy through reduced greenhouse gas emissions and exporting opportunities. They suggested support for the development of the industry, and for incentives for individuals and business to adopt clean and renewable energy. Innergex, a renewable energy producer, suggested the creation of an infrastructure fund to enable transitions to renewable energy. A number of presentations advocated for ways to specifically support the adoption of solar or wind energy.

Some submissions focused on the need for broader provincial support for programming and funding for environmental protection, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Committee heard about gaps in electric vehicle infrastructure such as charging stations, and received a number of suggestions related to increasing the adoption of electric and other clean energy or green vehicles.

Another area of interest brought forward during the consultation this year was water. One suggestion asked for specific investments in water security through water storage infrastructure as a climate change adaptation measure, while some organizations requested the establishment of a dedicated fund for watershed stewardship and sustainability.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation and Management

Many wildlife associations from across the province asked for fees to be collected from a broader range of natural resource users in recognition of the impact these users have on the natural environment. They also requested all fees, including those from hunting and angling, be specifically dedicated back to wildlife conservation. B.C. is one of the few jurisdictions in North America that does not have a dedicated funding model for conservation.

The Kamloops and District Fish and Game Association (KDFGA) spoke specifically about the decline of the Thompson River steelhead salmon species and the associated impacts on recreational fishing should this trend continue. The KDFGA asked the Committee to ensure that measures are taken to preserve Thompson River steelhead salmon species.

Invasive Species and Noxious Weeds

The Committee heard about challenges with invasive species and noxious weeds in many areas of the province. Submissions outlined the detrimental impact of invasive species and noxious weeds on B.C.'s biodiversity, environment and economy and that long-term funding and stronger enforcement is needed. A number of organizations pointed to weaknesses with current legislation, particularly as it relates to the sale, ownership and propagation of non-native plants.

Increasing investments in the area of proactive prevention and ongoing maintenance, including better education and public outreach, might go a long way to preventing and reducing the spread of infestation.

Submissions also drew attention to provincial responsibility for addressing infestations on Crown lands, as well as the need to partner with the federal government to deal with plants on land or conduits of federally-regulated companies.

Conclusions

Committee Members reiterated their prior years' support for funding increases to BC Parks, sharing concerns about park maintenance and staffing. Noting the popularity of provincial parks, they agreed that capacity needs to be increased to meet demand.

The Committee also supported more funding for conservation and wildlife management. To that end, license fees from natural resource users should be directed to conservation and wildlife management activities. Committee Members also recommend prioritizing the restoration and protection of endangered fresh and saltwater fish species.

In regard to clean energy and climate change, Committee Members discussed the economic and environmental impacts of the clean energy sector, and support its further development. Committee Members recognized the importance of clean energy technologies, measures to mitigate climate change and support for additional initiatives to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Committee shared the concerns they heard about the negative impact of invasive species and noxious weeds, and reiterated their previous recommendation to increase funding for the prevention, eradication and control of invasive species and noxious weeds. Committee Members also recommended an explicit ban on possession, propagation and ownership of these, with a specific call to work with the federal government on preventing importation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

BC Parks

52. Ensure that base funding is adequate and indexed to inflation to meet BC Parks legislative mandate and to provide sufficient park ranger staff to ensure public park services as well as environmental monitoring are at appropriate levels to protect and maintain the parks system. (2015: #30)

53. Increase the number of overnight campsites incrementally to meet the demands of B.C. residents and visitors, and continue to review measures to ensure the online campsite reservation system is protected from manipulation.

Clean Energy and Climate Change

54. In conjunction with the federal government, establish a Clean Infrastructure Fund to assist and expedite the transition to renewable power and support production and export opportunities for B.C. renewable energy and associated technology. (2014: #54 and 2015: #32)

55. Review tax measures and incentives for renewable energy users and adaptors. (2015: #31)

56. Provide support for the development of B.C.'s clean technology sector to facilitate the transition to electrification and to take advantage of the economic opportunities in addressing climate change.

57. Implement budget and supporting infrastructure measures to help accelerate the adoption of zero emission vehicles, encourage the replacement of high-emission vehicles and provide additional funding to extend the Clean Energy Vehicle Program beyond its March, 2018 expiry date.

58. Support and fund climate action initiatives, including a range of clean energy and energy conservation systems, to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions while improving efficiency in industry, transportation and the built environment.

59. Fund climate adaptation and preparedness measures to address climate related issues such as rising sea levels and extreme weather events. (2015: #63)

60. Expand provincial water storage infrastructure to secure B.C.'s ability to adapt to climate change and extended dry periods.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation and Management

61. Direct license fees collected from natural resource users (hunters, anglers, ecotourists, etc.) to conservation and wildlife management services, rehabilitation, enforcement and education.

62. Prioritize and fund restoration and protection of endangered fresh and saltwater fish species and fisheries.

Invasive Species and Noxious Weeds

63. Ban the possession, ownership, propagation or sale of aquatic or land-based invasive species, plants and noxious weeds and lobby the federal government to implement legislation to prevent importation. (2014: #57 and 2015: #33)

64. Increase funding for the eradication and control of invasive species and noxious weeds, including long-term prevention and ongoing maintenance through regional provincial government and community organization stakeholders. (2014: #57 and 2015: #33)

Theme 7: Housing

Based on the volume of recommendations the Committee received related to housing, Committee Members determined that a section dedicated to housing be added to their report this year. Additionally, the first question of the survey in the Budget 2017 Consultation Paper asked British Columbians to provide input on housing affordability and rental housing supply. Many submissions highlighted the importance of affordable housing as a priority for British Columbians and pointed to the need for all levels of government, the private sector, and real estate developers to work together to provide affordable housing. Many expressed concern regarding the barriers that may exist for vulnerable populations to access secure, affordable and livable housing.

Several presenters noted the benefits experienced by seniors who are able to live independently in their own homes, with the appropriate level of support, and suggested that existing programs could be expanded. A number of submissions expressed concerns regarding the administration of the *Residential Tenancy Act* and would like to see actions taken to ensure it is applied fairly. While landlord and tenant disputes may not be completely eradicated, submissions suggested that the dispute resolution process could be examined for efficiencies, and that government could strengthen protection for renters.

Affordable Housing

The BC Chamber of Commerce, BC Non-Profit Housing Association, Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce and other organizations put forth a common suggestion that all levels of government (federal, provincial and municipal) need to work together to create a comprehensive and cohesive strategy for attainable housing. Density, diversification and overall supply of affordable rental housing need to be addressed. Government cannot accomplish this goal singlehandedly and needs dedicated cooperation from the private sector – in particular, from real estate developers and builders. To that end, developers need incentives to realize and actualize value in the creation of more affordable housing and purpose-built rental units.

The Office of the Seniors Advocate noted the effectiveness of the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program, which provides supports to address rental pressures to enable seniors to live independently in their own homes. There are opportunities to emulate and expand programs such as SAFER and to look at new ways to provide supports for vulnerable populations, such as low-income families, single parents, new Canadians and people with disabilities to obtain affordable and safe housing.

The BC Chamber of Commerce asked for a review of the *Residential Tenancy Act* and associated regulations to ensure it is administered in a fair and transparent manner. The dispute resolution process for tenants and landlords could be streamlined and further protections could be put in place to ensure renters are not being evicted unfairly.

Conclusions

Committee Members recognized the importance of a safe, stable and affordable home, and agreed that housing affordability for British Columbians from all walks of life needs to be a priority. Without a stable place to live, it can be difficult to ensure the other necessities in life are met. British Columbia is an incredibly diverse province with a wide range of housing requirements and an evolving population base which creates challenges in meeting the need for housing.

Given the concerns regarding the lack of affordable housing and rental accommodations, the Committee urged government to play a lead role in working collaboratively with other levels of government and the private sector to resolve these issues. Developers and builders should be offered opportunities and incentives to create more affordable housing and rental units.

Acknowledging the need for fairness and consistency in application of the *Residential Tenancy Act* and its regulations, the Committee recommended that the Act be reviewed, and that ways to make the dispute resolution process less onerous be developed. Additionally, Committee Members support better protection for renters in relation to the eviction process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Affordable Housing

65. Work with all levels of government, as well as the private sector, to create a comprehensive strategy for attainable housing.
66. Offer opportunities and incentives to the private sector to increase the supply, density and diversification of purpose-built rental units for British Columbians, including for vulnerable populations.
67. Review and expand programs, such as the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program, to support low-income and other vulnerable populations to access the rental market and to allow seniors to remain independent in their own homes. (2015: #43)

68. Conduct a review of the *Residential Tenancy Act* to ensure fairness for landlords and tenants in how it is administered and to look for ways to streamline the dispute resolution process and strengthen protections for renters related to the eviction process.

Theme 8: Indigenous Peoples

Committee Members received a wide range of submissions related to Indigenous peoples for many of the topics included in this report, including advanced and K-12 education, arts and culture, social services and public libraries. Representatives from First Nations, Metis or Aboriginal organizations that support Indigenous peoples living on and off reserve and represent communities from across the province, including the north, Vancouver Island, coastal regions, urban centres and the interior made submissions to the Committee.

Committee Members felt that a section on Indigenous peoples should also be added to this year's report. The Committee also wished to acknowledge the significance of the findings and recommendations within the 2015 report[1] released by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the inherent value of the diverse representation of Indigenous peoples in British Columbia.

Advanced Education and Training

Education and training are fundamental to ensuring that British Columbians from all walks of life have the opportunity to secure good jobs, provide for themselves and their families, and contribute to their communities. The Mining Association of British Columbia highlighted the need for targeted training to enable more Indigenous peoples to work in B.C.'s diverse natural resource sector. College of the Rockies, Langara College and North Island College saw the equitable provision of Aboriginal Service Plan funding to all post-secondary institutions as an opportunity for government to dedicate more support for Indigenous peoples pursuing advanced degrees. The University of the Fraser Valley urged the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada in relation to post-secondary institutions.

Arts and Culture, Public Libraries

The City of Vancouver suggested the provision of funding for communities to prepare for Canada's 150th anniversary (sesquicentennial) celebrations, and to ensure that a focus on B.C.'s diverse and rich culture related to Indigenous peoples is part of those preparations. A number of public library advocates, including Vancouver Public Library, Richmond Public Library Board, Prince George Public Library and others were unified in their call for dedicated delivery of library

[1] "Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action" (2015, available at: www.trc.ca)

services in Indigenous communities, with a focus on the development of local capacity within those communities to carry on service and provide jobs.

K-12 Education

British Columbia Teachers' Federation requested additional funding to ensure that learning resources reflective of B.C. Indigenous peoples are developed and readily available for all grades and subject areas. This suggestion echoes those brought forward to the Committee from a variety of organizations, including Board of Education, School District No.46 (Sunshine Coast) and the Prince Rupert District Teachers' Union who want government to provide funding for school districts to implement the education-related recommendations put forth by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, as included in the new curriculum.

Social Services

West Coast Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) highlighted the issues surrounding the over-incarceration of Indigenous peoples in B.C., suggesting that government address this through better coordination, effectiveness and transparency in the correctional system. Additional funding should be provided to the Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of British Columbia and the Aboriginal Justice Council to provide more services and support for Indigenous peoples in the justice system. Organizations such as suxkenxitelxkl chechamala (Aboriginal Early Years Table) and First Call: BC Child & Youth Advocacy Coalition want to see increased focus on the provision of early intervention and child development programs, as well as child care services to better meet the needs of Indigenous families, living on or off-reserve. The Friendship House Association of Prince Rupert urged increased support for local community organizations, such as the various Friendship Houses located in urban and rural communities throughout the province, so they can continue to provide social services and programs to Indigenous clients, including housing supports.

Conclusions

The Committee was pleased to see many organizations that represent and work with Indigenous peoples from many diverse communities within B.C. participate in the consultation process. Committee Members hope government will provide the funding necessary to move reconciliation efforts forward in our province.

The many Friendship Houses in B.C. work diligently and often without dedicated funding to provide a wide range of services and support to diverse Indigenous communities. Given the challenges associated with the over-incarceration of Indigenous peoples in our justice and

correctional systems, the Committee urges government to work to rectify this issue, in partnership with Indigenous groups and other key stakeholders.

Advanced and K-12 education are key aspects needed to move reconciliation forward. However, updates to the curriculum are not the only educational improvements the Committee wants to see implemented. A wide range of organizations brought forth innovative ideas to engage Indigenous students in advanced education and training to not only maximize their potential, but to also provide a highly-skilled labour force as the engine to drive B.C.'s growing economy, including the natural resource sector.

The importance of community libraries and the wealth of information they contain cannot be understated. Public libraries should be able to continue to provide this valuable service in communities, large and small, throughout the province.

The Committee strongly supports the opportunity to highlight the vibrant and diverse contributions of art and culture provided by Indigenous peoples. Canada's upcoming 150th anniversary is a prime opportunity to showcase local Indigenous artists, musicians, dancers, filmmakers and others who contribute to B.C.'s vivid arts and culture scene.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Advanced Education and Training

69. Increase investments in post-secondary education so institutions can deliver quality programming and student support services, and implement the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission related to the new curriculum.
70. Dedicate resources to targeted training opportunities for Indigenous peoples to work in the natural resource sector and continue to support current programs in place.
71. Provide equitable Aboriginal Service Plan funding to all post-secondary institutions.

Arts and Culture, Public Libraries

72. Provide funding to ensure that communities preparing for Canada's 150th anniversary (sesquicentennial) celebrations reflect the living culture of B.C.'s many Indigenous peoples.

73. Work with the federal government to support the dedicated delivery of public library services in Indigenous communities on reserve and develop local capacity within those communities. (2015: #56)

K-12 Education

74. Provide new funding to ensure that learning resources reflective of B.C. Indigenous peoples are developed and readily accessible for all grades and subject areas.

75. Provide adequate funding to support the educational mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations.

Social Services

76. Provide funding to expand and build capacity in existing childcare, and early intervention and child development programs to help meet the needs of Indigenous children and families in B.C., including those living on- and off-reserve.

77. Ensure that a coordinated, effective and transparent system is in place to address the over-incarceration of Indigenous peoples in B.C. and provide funding to the Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of BC and the Aboriginal Justice Council.

78. Increase support for housing for Indigenous peoples living in urban areas and provide funding for local community organizations such as local Friendship Houses.

Theme 9: Sport, Culture and Arts

The importance of supporting professional athletes and encouraging recreational participation to promote good health for British Columbians was a common theme heard throughout the consultation. Providing an investment in healthy living now can help curtail fiscal pressures on health care spending as B.C.'s population continues to age.

Sport, arts and culture have a significant social impact on our communities and Committee Members recognize the many economic benefits that a well-supported arts and culture sector can bring to British Columbians and visitors to our province. Many arts and culture organizations rely on provincial grants to sustain their operations and to provide funding to new and emerging artists.

Arts and Culture Funding and Support

The provincial per capita funding on arts and culture could be increased to support the growing number of artists in B.C. A number of organizations, including the Alliance for Arts + Culture, Pacific Association of Artist Run Centres, and Professional Arts Alliance of Greater Victoria highlighted the importance of continued and reliable funding provided through community gaming grants and expressed the need for these grants to return to 2008 levels, with incremental increases provided as gaming revenues grow. These organizations further noted their request for multi-year funding agreements to increase organizational stability and lessen administrative burden.

The Motion Picture Production Industry Association of British Columbia highlighted the significant positive economic impacts of B.C.'s creative economy and how this is fueled by not only those in the film industry, but also others in the creative sector. A number of organizations, such as the Alliance for Arts + Culture, expressed the need to continuously nurture and support emerging artists, regardless of socioeconomic standing, to ensure the creative community is consistently regenerated with new talent. With planning underway for Canada's 150th Anniversary (sesquicentennial) celebrations in 2017, the request to ensure that communities have access to provincial and federal financial supports to mark this momentous occasion was a common theme heard by the Committee.

Public Libraries

B.C.'s 71 public libraries see nearly 60 million in-person and online visitors every year and have 3,500 computer terminals available for public use. Libraries can now offer much more than just the loan of reading materials, including computer and internet access, community gathering

places, and opportunities for education. A variety of rural and urban public libraries requested long-term, inflation-adjusted, stable funding for public libraries for the provision of services, and to provide the opportunities to implement new innovations in service delivery.

Sport Funding

In their presentation to the Committee, the BC Seniors Games Society spoke about plans already underway for host communities for the 55+ BC Games events in 2017. The Committee heard about the significant positive socio-economic benefits that the 55+ BC Games will provide to a number of communities, visitors and seniors around the province who will participate in various sporting events.

Committee Members heard from a broad range of sports organizations, including the Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence (PISE), Engage Sport North, and ViaSport British Columbia and PacificSport Okanagan, who outlined the many benefits of physical literacy[2] programming and education. Many sports organizations expressed the need for additional funding to support the development of quality coaching and sports performance experts to enhance the performance of developing athletes.

Conclusions

After hearing from many organizations that represent arts, culture and heritage, the Committee expressed their appreciation for the many socio-economic benefits that British Columbians experience through engagement with these sectors. To affirm their support, the Committee recommended increased, stable, multi-year funding for arts, culture and heritage organizations. Committee Members also recognized the importance of professional and recreational sports, and the physical, emotional and social benefits of sports participation and physical literacy, no matter one's age or ability.

The Committee heard from a range of public libraries and library organizations from around the province who expressed the need for increased, stable ongoing funding for our provincial public library system and in support of this, Committee Members ask government to continue to provide this funding on behalf of B.C.'s 71 public libraries.

In light of the importance of gaming grants for the funding provided to many arts and culture organizations, the Committee reiterated their recommendations from 2014 and 2015 to restore

[2] Physical literacy is the mastering of fundamental movement skills and fundamental sport skills that permit a child to read their environment and make appropriate decisions, allowing them to move confidently and with control in a wide range of physical activity situations. (2012, available at: piseworld.com/physical-literacy/

gaming grants to 2008 levels, and to provide incremental increases in line with any future increase in gaming-generated provincial revenue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Arts and Culture Funding and Support

79. Increase provincial per capita funding to support the growing number of artists in B.C. and the vibrant creative economy, and provide increased, stable, multi-year funding for arts, culture and heritage organizations to promote, educate and support B.C.'s arts community. (2014: #47 and 2015: #53)

80. Ensure local communities can access provincial and federal funding to celebrate and promote Canada's 150th anniversary of confederation (sesquicentennial) celebrations in 2017.

81. Restore gaming grants to 2008 levels ($156 million from the current $134 million) and provide incremental increases as gaming revenues increase. (2014: #47 and 2015: #54)

Libraries

82. Provide inflation-adjusted funding increases to public libraries to enable them to sustain basic levels of service and consider additional increases to implement new innovations in service delivery.

Sport Funding

83. Consider additional funding for multi-sport and senior sports organizations to promote and increase professional performance and recreational participation in sports, as well as coaching services, education and development.

Theme 10: Natural Resources

Natural resources is an important sector of the provincial economy and many presenters discussed the importance of natural resource development in the lives of British Columbians and their families, especially as it relates to jobs in small communities.

Several submissions discussed agriculture and agri-food, including farmers' markets, while others commented on specific natural resource sectors such as fisheries and forestry. Committee Members also heard of the need to improve capacity within government ministries to support natural resource operations and enforce regulations.

Agriculture and Agri-food

The Central Okanagan Food Policy Council highlighted opportunities to support local food systems, improve sustainability in agriculture, and the importance of conserving the Agricultural Land Reserve for B.C.'s agriculture future.

The BC Association of Farmers' Markets, an organization which represents over 135 farmers' markets across the province, asked for investment in their specific sector. Farmers' markets contribute to the economy, strengthen community relationships, and support healthy living and food security.

The BC Food Processors Association (BCFPA), who represent the food, beverage and natural health products industries, explained that a shortage of labour and inefficient equipment is inhibiting their growth. They requested continued investment in the B.C. Job Grant and incentives for upgrading equipment. The BCFPA also noted that B.C. does not have a food innovation centre to help food processors with product development.

Fisheries

Committee Members heard from the United Fishermen & Allied Workers' Union about the closure of the local cannery in Prince Rupert. The presenters described the history of the fisheries industry on the North Coast, and illustrated the financial impact of the closure on workers, their families, and the community. Ways to develop or expand processing industries to maintain or create new local jobs need to be found.

The Committee also heard a presentation on the value of buying canned salmon for food and nutrition programs, as well as the economic and health benefits of such an initiative.

Forestry

The Committee received several recommendations related to the forestry sector with a consistent viewpoint regarding growth and revitalization of this industry which is critical to many communities, especially in Central and Northern B.C. Submissions outlined financial aspects such as stumpage and the tax regime, as well as the need to maximize the supply and value of timber, and establish new markets for forest products.

The Prince George Chamber of Commerce urged government action in relation to the spruce beetle infestation. They pointed out that an early and aggressive response is key to addressing the infestation, and preventing it from becoming similar to the mountain pine beetle outbreak.

Natural Resource Development and Operations

The Northeast BC Resource Municipalities Coalition spoke about the challenges and opportunities for local communities, businesses and residents with natural resource development. While resource development has a high level of support, the Coalition explained that benefits need to be distributed more equitably to mitigate impacts on local environments and quality of life.

The Committee also heard from Geoscience BC, an organization that delivers publicly accessible, independent earth science data, who requested long-term predictable funding for additional work in energy, and minerals and mining research. This was reiterated by the Association for Mineral Exploration British Columbia (AME BC) and Teck Resources Limited. The AME BC further recommended the British Columbia Geological Survey be provided additional resources for updates to mapping and geological databases.

A few organizations expressed concern about budgeting and staffing levels within government ministries and their ability to support the natural resource sector. Natural resource industries such as mining interact with ministries on an ongoing basis in regard to regulatory processes, permitting, environmental reviews, inspections and much more. The natural resource sector therefore relies on these ministries to ensure consistent and clear processes, and timely decisions. Other groups, such as wildlife organizations, expect these ministries to appropriately enforce environmental regulations, and fish and wildlife management.

Conclusions

The Committee appreciated hearing directly from British Columbians who work in natural resource sectors, and support recommendations to grow these industries and develop new job opportunities.

The submissions on agriculture and agri-food covered an array of areas for the Committee's consideration, including sustainable growth, labour and technology, farms and farmers' markets, as well as the importance of protecting the Agricultural Land Reserve.

As it relates to natural resource development opportunities, the Committee acknowledged the relationship between communities, industry and government ministries and agreed that development should be enabled and any resulting benefits equitably distributed. The Committee recommends an examination of natural resource revenue sharing models, as well as appropriate funding for minerals and mining research, and geological mapping. The Committee further recommends adequate budgets and staffing be in place to allow ministries to effectively undertake their core responsibilities, including enforcement, related to the forestry, mining, energy and other natural resource sectors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Agriculture and Agri-Food

84. Provide programs, policies and financial incentives to strengthen agriculture and the agri-foods sector, including: Food Policy Councils; farmer's market programs and infrastructure; financial assistance for farmers; incentives to modernize food and beverage production technologies; and the development of a food innovation centre. (2015: #45)

85. Strengthen agricultural practices around land use and focus on protection of the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Fisheries

86. Identify and develop creative opportunities to expand and maintain fish and seafood processing industries in coastal communities to maintain the viability of those communities with local jobs.

Forestry

87. Revitalize the forest industry and maximize job opportunities for British Columbians, including through strategic partnerships with First Nations and local communities.

88. Control and contain the current and growing spruce beetle infestation to prevent a repeat of the mountain pine beetle infestation.

Natural Resource Development and Operations

89. Ensure equitability in natural resource revenue-sharing models and make sure that future resource development results in increased benefits for communities.
90. Provide long-term predictable funding for Geoscience BC to enable future investments in energy development, as well as minerals and mining research.
91. Provide adequate resources to update current geological mapping and databases.
92. Ensure that budgets and staffing levels are allocated appropriately to ministries so they can effectively undertake their core responsibilities, including enforcement, related to the forestry, mining, energy and other natural resource sectors.

Theme 11: Transportation and Transit

The Committee received a number of submissions on the topic of transportation and transit. A large proportion suggested increased funding to support accessible transportation, active transportation (cycling and walking), and public transit. Submissions emphasized the importance of choice, inclusion and affordability in supporting these transportation investments and drew linkages to perceived economic, social and health benefits. Other transportation-related recommendations focused on trade corridors, facilitating the movement of goods, and specific issues related to northern communities and rural highways.

Accessible Transportation

A number of organizations highlighted challenges regarding transportation supports and services for people with disabilities and seniors and emphasized that these services and supports are key to maintaining connections to the community. Inclusion BC, a provincial non-profit organization that promotes the participation of people with developmental disabilities in community life, spoke specifically to the issue of affordability. Providing financial support for transportation results in economic, social, mental and physical benefits for persons with disabilities, as they are able to actively contribute to their communities. Save Our Northern Seniors, a community advocacy organization for seniors, noted that current service levels are insufficient and explained that services such as HandyDART are often completely booked or unavailable, and recommended increasing these services.

Active Transportation (Cycling and Walking)

Providing appropriate and safe infrastructure to facilitate and encourage cycling and walking gives British Columbians access to practical, affordable and alternative means of getting around. Proponents pointed to the economic, social and public health benefits of increasing investment in active transportation through reduced congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, improved physical and mental health, and improved overall quality of life. A number of submissions also referenced the economic opportunities of attracting visitors to the province through cycling tourism.

The British Columbia Cycling Coalition (BCCC) and the BC Healthy Living Alliance (BCHLA) reiterated their suggestion from previous years for the development of a comprehensive Active Transportation Strategy. The BCCC emphasized the need for a multi-modal transportation system for all ages and abilities, while the BCHLA focused on designing communities to support activity in children and families. Both organizations also supported cycling education to improve safety and decrease conflicts between road users. Active transportation also emerged

as a recurring theme within the online survey, with many respondents proposing active transportation (as well as transit) related recommendations under the "other" options.

Public Transit

Several submissions advocated long-term funding models and improvements in public transit. BC Transit's Strategic Plan 2030 and the Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation's 10-Year Vision for Metro Vancouver Transit and Transportation were specifically referenced as areas for investment. The David Suzuki Foundation discussed the opportunity to reduce congestion and carbon emissions from road transportation by providing alternatives to a personal vehicle. The Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training pointed to a lack of transportation alternatives as a barrier for vulnerable populations to get to work and sustain employment, an issue that is especially acute in rural and remote communities.

The Committee also heard from a number of student unions in Metro Vancouver on the U-Pass BC program which provides post-secondary students with access to public transportation at a reduced monthly rate. The societies explained that a large proportion of students rely on public transit to get to school and appreciated the recent two-year renewal of the program. However, they emphasized the need for a long-term, ongoing commitment to ensure the program continues to help make post-secondary education accessible and affordable.

Transportation Infrastructure

Several organizations made a case for investment in transportation infrastructure more broadly. The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade noted that transportation infrastructure is critical to the movement of people, goods and services, and emphasized B.C.'s role as part of the Asia Pacific Gateway. Other organizations, such as the Prince Rupert Port Authority, expressed the need for a coordinated, strategic approach to the development of ports and trade corridors with federal, provincial and municipal partners to improve efficiency and competitiveness.

The Prince Rupert Port Authority and the City of Prince Rupert further drew attention to transportation challenges resulting from growth for northern communities and suggested that government examine opportunities for additional funding and partnerships to address these challenges.

The Committee also received a specific request related to highway safety improvements in rural areas. The British Columbia Cattlemen's Association (BCCA) described how fencing contributes to highway safety by reducing collisions between vehicles and livestock. The BCCA noted that previous investments in highway fencing have proven worthwhile and asked the Committee to

consider a recommendation for an ongoing commitment to improve highway safety, through measures such as highway fencing.

Conclusions

Transportation infrastructure is a fundamental enabler of day-to-day mobility for British Columbians. More investments are needed to ensure transportation options are affordable, accessible and safe in both urban and rural communities. To that end, the Committee echoed recommendations from the 2015 report to increase investment in active transportation and ensure long-term, stable funding for public transit. Government should provide more affordable and accessible transportation options and services to persons with disabilities and seniors, and commit to long-term funding of the U-Pass BC program. Additionally, the Committee recommended that improvements to highway safety be implemented in rural areas.

Transportation plays a vital role in economic development and Committee Members shared concerns regarding gaps in the development of inland and coastal ports, and trade corridors. The Committee therefore called on government to work with other governments and port authorities to develop a coordinated approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Accessible Transportation

93. Provide more affordable and accessible transportation options and services to persons with disabilities and seniors in urban and rural communities, including HandyDART and accessible taxis.

Active Transportation (Cycling and Walking)

94. Increase investment in active transportation (cycling and walking) in urban and rural communities, including infrastructure improvements and safety education, to promote healthy lifestyles and provide social, environmental and economic benefits. (2015: #58)

Public Transit

95. Ensure long-term, stable funding for transportation and public transit infrastructure improvements. (2014: #51 and 2015: #59, 60)

96. Commit to long-term funding of the U-Pass BC program beyond April, 2018, and end cyclical contract expiry by developing a long-term standardized and affordable U-Pass BC program indexed to inflation.

Transportation Infrastructure

97. Develop a coordinated approach with federal, provincial and municipal governments and port authorities for the management of inland and coastal ports, and alternative approaches for trade corridor and development of supply chain management outside of the current boundaries.

98. Increase investment in highway safety in rural areas, such as fencing, to limit vehicle collisions with wildlife or livestock.

Theme 12: Public Safety

The Committee received a small number of submissions related to public safety, mainly focussed on correctional services and facilities, the provision of legal aid services, and the need for increased awareness of emergency preparedness in relation to natural disasters.

Justice and Correctional Services

Representatives from West Coast Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) spoke about the need for correctional facilities and services for women and youth on Vancouver Island and highlighted the importance of family visits to support rehabilitation and reintegration programs. Presenters noted that parents or children often need to travel long distances to meet with their family members who are in correctional facilities on the mainland and explained how this can create undue financial and emotional stress for families. The provision of funding and support to develop additional correctional services on Vancouver Island would help to relieve some of the pressures experienced by families as they continue to provide support to their family members in the justice system.

Several organizations highlighted the findings and recommendations outlined in a 2016 report[3] released by B.C.'s Office of the Ombudsperson in relation to correctional centre inspections. The regular and robust inspections of provincial correctional facilities is one of the fundamental mechanisms in place to ensure that the power of the state is implemented in an appropriate manner, according to the Office of the Ombudsperson.

Legal Aid

A variety of organizations and individuals, including the BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU), West Coast LEAF and Canadian Bar Association, British Columbia Branch, called for increased provision and availability of legal aid services.

West Coast LEAF highlighted the need for increased and sustained funding for legal aid services to ensure that women, families, and those in restorative justice programs have access to this service. In order to ensure equitability in accessing legal aid, West Coast LEAF suggested that child support benefits should be exempted from the calculation of income for legal aid eligibility, similar to how this calculation is performed for social assistance eligibility. A number of submissions suggested that an increase in the per capita funding for legal aid and that increasing the tariff fee could provide incentives for more lawyers to offer legal aid services.

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[3] "Under Inspection: The Hiatus in BC Correctional Centre Inspections" (2016, available at: www. bcombudsperson.ca)

Natural Disasters and Emergency Preparedness

The Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC) stressed the importance of emergency preparedness and disaster planning for British Columbians, from both a physical and financial perspective. IBC advocates on behalf of Canada's private property and casualty insurance companies, and an important aspect of their work involves engagement in coordinated preparations and responses to natural disasters. As mentioned in previous presentations to the Committee, it was noted that a high number of British Columbians do not believe that a major earthquake will affect them in their lifetime and these individuals often overestimate their levels of financial and physical preparedness for such a catastrophic emergency.

Conclusions

The Committee recognized the need for additional correctional services and facilities on Vancouver Island and understands the importance of family support and in-person visits to increase the likelihood of rehabilitation and reintegration for those in the correctional system. Committee Members are cognizant of the undue stress and financial hardship that travelling long distances could place on families and agreed that government should establish these facilities on Vancouver Island.

Committee Members were interested to learn about the findings and recommendations outlined in the report released by the Office of the Ombudsperson and recommend that government work to ensure the minimum standards are met in relation to the operation and inspection of correctional facilities.

Committee Members commented on the importance of legal aid services - access to this crucial service can improve the experience of an individual as they make their way through the complexities of the justice system, regardless of the final outcome. Committee Members reiterated the importance of fairness and equitability as to who is eligible to receive this service and recommended increased funding.

While no specific recommendations were put forth by the Committee in relation to natural disasters and emergency preparedness, Committee Members would like to see more of a "culture of preparedness" developed in British Columbia where individual responsibility for awareness and preparation is at the forefront.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommends to the Legislative Assembly that the provincial government:

Justice and Correctional Services

99. Provide funding and support for the development of correctional services and supports on Vancouver Island dedicated to women and youth.

100. Ensure that the minimum standards are met in relation to the operation and inspection of correctional facilities and implement the recommendations outlined by the B.C. Office of the Ombudsperson in a 2016 report[4].

Legal Aid

101. Provide increased, sustained and adequate funding for legal aid to ensure this service is available for those who need it, including women, families and those in restorative justice programs. (2014: #42 and 2015: #61)

102. Increase the tariff fee to create incentives for more legal aid services and review the current exemptions from the calculation of income for legal aid eligibility to ensure fairness.

[4] "Under Inspection: The Hiatus in BC Correctional Centre Inspections" (2016, available at: www.bcombudsperson.ca)

Summary of Recommendations

The twelve themes highlighted within this report are ordered to reflect the areas of focus and priority, as determined by the number of recommendations received during the Committee's consultation process. A number of recommendations included in this report are ones that the Committee wishes to reiterate from budget consultation reports that relate to the Budget 2015 and 2016 consultation processes. References to recommendations from previous years' reports are noted in parentheses at the end of each recommendation, including the year the report was released and recommendation number.

The Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services recommends to the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia that the provincial government:

THEME 1: HEALTH CARE

Community Care and Seniors

1. Establish a long-term, predictable funding model that includes training and education to improve dementia care, and funding for 3.36 direct care hours per resident as a standard for all facilities.
2. Increase supports available to improve quality of life for seniors in long-term care, such as dental care and programs that support mental, physical, spiritual and emotional well-being.
3. Expand home care programs and services, such as home visits, meal delivery and community care, to allow seniors to remain in their homes longer.
4. Expand support and funding for a broad range of hospice care and bereavement programs to ensure that these services are available to British Columbians and their families. (2015: #22)
5. Establish a dental care plan for low-income seniors and people receiving income assistance, similar to the Healthy Kids Program (for low-income families).

Funding

6. Ensure adequate funding is directed to rural, remote and isolated communities to allow greater access to local supports, such as midwives and nurse practitioners. (2014: #16)
7. Continue to invest in technology, training and resources to expand video and telecommunications services to provide virtual options to link patients in remote, rural and isolated communities with health care providers in larger centres.

8. Provide additional funding for provincial spinal cord injury and disability organizations to continue supporting British Columbians with physical disabilities.

9. Increase investment in health data research and life sciences to support health care innovation, maximize value, and improve patient health outcomes.

10. Increase funding for community-based brain injury associations and organizations to facilitate public education, prevention, as well as coordinated services and support for those living with brain injuries and their families.

Health Care Providers

11. Expand the scope of practice for health care professionals and create a multi-disciplinary team approach, including (but not limited to): nurse practitioners, chiropractors, optometrists, physiotherapists, dietitians and pharmacists.

Healthy Living and Wellness

12. Increase investment in initiatives that promote healthy living for British Columbians and provide multi-year funding to enable effective and collaborative health promotion programs between non-profit organizations and provincial health authorities.

13. Review the provision of food services in hospitals and other health care facilities to ensure that healthier and more palatable options are made available to patients.

14. Extend the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) to cover all sugar-sweetened beverages or introduce an excise tax on sugar-sweetened beverages and use a portion of this revenue to fund health promotion. (2014: #19 and 2015: #27)

15. Expand the publicly-funded, school-based Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination program to all eligible youth. (2015: #23)

16. Invest in a program to provide universal baseline testing for prostate cancer to help raise awareness and improve health outcomes.

Mental Health and Addictions

17. Provide increased services and support for British Columbians with mental health and addictions-related challenges, including effective, evidence-based prevention and models of care, as well as early identification, intervention and support for those transitioning into the workforce. (2015: #25)

THEME 2: ADVANCED EDUCATION

ABE, ESL and Literacy

18. Reinstate tuition-free English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE) and adult special education programs. (2014: #32 and 2015: #4)

19. Provide stable and predictable multi-year funding for coordinated community literacy programs and services. (2014: #46 and 2015: #10)

Capital Funding

20. Develop a solution to enable post-secondary institutions to finance self-supported capital projects, including student residences and housing. (2014: #31 and 2015: #7)

Operational and Program Funding

21. Increase operating grants to post-secondary institutions to address unfunded cost pressures and move to multi-year allotments for operating grants and deferred maintenance grants to help these institutions with their financial planning. (2014: #27, #28 and 2015: #11)

22. Increase funding for programs to address areas with identified skills gaps in the workforce, such as physical therapy, engineering and technology and applied research.

Tuition and Financial Assistance

23. Establish a needs-based student grant program that addresses student needs and provides incentives for completion and conduct a review of the current B.C. student loan eligibility requirements and interest charged on B.C. student loans. (2014: #34, #35 and 2015: #13)

THEME 3: FISCAL POLICY

Balanced Budgets and Debt Reduction

24. Focus on fiscal prudence and responsible budgeting, while ensuring that the debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio is within reasonable limits. (2014: #1, 2 and 2015: #14)

Carbon Tax

25. Conduct periodic reviews of the application of the Carbon Tax, including identifying opportunities to mitigate any impact(s) on emission-intensive or trade-exposed sectors and industries, as well as its continued effectiveness in reducing emissions.

Credit Unions

26. Remove the 30 percent capital penalty on credit unions (both B.C.-based credit unions and B.C.-based operations of national credit unions) and make the temporary deferment of the preferential provincial tax rate permanent. (2014: #7 and 2015: #16)

Medical Services Plan

27. Conduct a review of other jurisdictions in order to determine alternative models for the Medical Services Plan (MSP) premium system. (2015: #24)

Property Transfer Tax

28. Review Property Transfer Tax (PTT) rates and exemptions to provide better opportunities for home ownership and in particular, for first-time homebuyers. (2014: #6 and 2015: #17)

Provincial Sales Tax

29. Exempt e-bikes (electric-assist bicycles) from the Provincial Sales Tax (PST) to encourage British Columbians to pursue active forms of transportation.

Small Business

30. Maintain a competitive corporate income tax rate and conduct a review of the small business tax rate.

31. Examine current public sector procurement policies to look for opportunities for a greater number of small businesses and companies to participate in the Request for Proposal (RFP) or bidding process.

THEME 4: SOCIAL SERVICES

Affordable Child Care, Child Development and Family Supports

32. Increase supports and services, including ministry staff and programs provided through the Ministry of Children and Family Development and contracted agencies, to assist vulnerable populations, including children and youth.

33. Invest more in early intervention/development programs and early childhood educators to assist children and youth, including those with special needs and their families.

34. Provide funding and support for the development and implementation of an affordable, accessible and high-quality childcare plan. (2014: #40 and 2015: #34)

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

35. Increase funding for transition houses, crisis centres and student organizations that provide education, services and support for those who are affected by domestic violence and sexual assault. (2015: #38)

Employment Training, Labour and Immigration

36. Partner with and build on the work carried out by community organizations who provide assistance and training to support the under-employed and those who face additional challenges.

37. Work with the federal government to make the Provincial Nominee Program more effective by educating business owners on the process, reducing processing times, and by awarding points for having a confirmed job offer.

38. Work with the federal government to review the requirement of a Labour Market Impact Assessment and to allow transferability of allotments between provinces.

39. Provide support for those sectors transitioning to a green economy through an increased focus on immigration, (re)training programs, locally-focused hiring plans, and the recruitment of skilled workers.

Income and Disability Assistance Rates

40. Review current income assistance and disability (PWD) rates and consider increases to reflect the cost of living in B.C., including an examination of the provincial housing and rental accommodation cost differentials. (2014: #37, 38 and 2015: #39)

41. Recognize Canada Pension Plan (CPP) benefits as earned income for those accessing disability and income assistance.

Poverty Reduction

42. Develop a comprehensive and integrated poverty reduction strategy, including legislated timelines and targets for the reduction of poverty (including child poverty) and homelessness in B.C. (2014: #37 and 2015: #42)

Youth Transition

43. Enhance and extend financial, educational, and relational programs and services to support youth transitioning out of foster care up to the age of 25 years old.

44. Allocate sufficient funds for supports and services to meet the needs of young adults who are turning 19 and transitioning from the Ministry of Children and Family Development to Community Living BC.

THEME 5: K-12 EDUCATION

Capital Funding

45. Provide adequate capital funding to urban and rural school districts for facility improvements, seismic upgrades and additional schools in rapidly-growing communities. (2014: #23 and 2015: #1)

46. Recognize portables as a capital expense for school districts, rather than as an operating expense.

47. Partner with local organizations to utilize education-related infrastructure when classrooms are not in use and to incorporate school board offices in under-capacity schools.

Operational Funding

48. Address inequities in the Ministry of Education funding formula, including discrepancies in the programs and services offered in rural or urban communities, as well as in administrative staff compensation levels. (2015: #3)

49. Provide predictable, sustainable and adequate yearly funding to enable school districts to fulfil their responsibility to continue to provide access to quality public education, with recognition of the increased costs that school districts have incurred. (2014: #22 and 2015: #2)

50. Increase funding to provide services and supports for vulnerable students and students with special needs and develop a more equitable distribution process of this funding.

Programming

51. Fund additional support and resources to implement the new curriculum.

THEME 6: ENVIRONMENT

BC Parks

52. Ensure that base funding is adequate and indexed to inflation to meet BC Parks legislative mandate and to provide sufficient park ranger staff to ensure public park services as well as environmental monitoring are at appropriate levels to protect and maintain the parks system. (2015: #30)

53. Increase the number of overnight campsites incrementally to meet the demands of B.C. residents and visitors, and continue to review measures to ensure the online campsite reservation system is protected from manipulation.

Clean Energy and Climate Change

54. In conjunction with the federal government, establish a Clean Infrastructure Fund to assist and expedite the transition to renewable power and support production and export opportunities for B.C. renewable energy and associated technology. (2014: #54 and 2015: #32)

55. Review tax measures and incentives for renewable energy users and adaptors. (2015: #31)

56. Provide support for the development of B.C.'s clean technology sector to facilitate the transition to electrification and to take advantage of the economic opportunities in addressing climate change.

57. Implement budget and supporting infrastructure measures to help accelerate the adoption of zero emission vehicles, encourage the replacement of high-emission vehicles and provide additional funding to extend the Clean Energy Vehicle Program beyond its March, 2018 expiry date.

58. Support and fund climate action initiatives, including a range of clean energy and energy conservation systems, to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions while improving efficiency in industry, transportation and the built environment.

59. Fund climate adaptation and preparedness measures to address climate related issues such as rising sea levels and extreme weather events. (2015: #63)

60. Expand provincial water storage infrastructure to secure B.C.'s ability to adapt to climate change and extended dry periods.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation and Management

61. Direct license fees collected from natural resource users (hunters, anglers, ecotourists, etc.) to conservation and wildlife management services, rehabilitation, enforcement and education.

62. Prioritize and fund restoration and protection of endangered fresh and saltwater fish species and fisheries.

Invasive Species and Noxious Weeds

63. Ban the possession, ownership, propagation or sale of aquatic or land-based invasive species, plants and noxious weeds and lobby the federal government to implement legislation to prevent importation. (2014: #57 and 2015: #33)

64. Increase funding for the eradication and control of invasive species and noxious weeds, including long-term prevention and ongoing maintenance through regional provincial government and community organization stakeholders. (2014: #57 and 2015: #33)

THEME 7: HOUSING

Affordable Housing

65. Work with all levels of government, as well as the private sector, to create a comprehensive strategy for attainable housing.

66. Offer opportunities and incentives to the private sector to increase the supply, density and diversification of purpose-built rental units for British Columbians, including for vulnerable populations.

67. Review and expand programs, such as the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program, to support low-income and other vulnerable populations to access the rental market and to allow seniors to remain independent in their own homes. (2015: #43)

68. Conduct a review of the *Residential Tenancy Act* to ensure fairness for landlords and tenants in how it is administered and to look for ways to streamline the dispute resolution process and strengthen protections for renters related to the eviction process.

THEME 8: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Advanced Education and Training

69. Increase investments in post-secondary education so institutions can deliver quality programming and student support services, and implement the recommendations regarding updated curriculum related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

70. Dedicate resources to targeted training opportunities for Indigenous peoples to work in the natural resource sector and continue to support current programs in place.

71. Provide equitable Aboriginal Service Plan funding to all post-secondary institutions.

Arts and Culture, Public Libraries

72. Provide funding to ensure that communities preparing for Canada's 150th anniversary (sesquicentennial) celebrations reflect the living culture of B.C.'s many Indigenous peoples.

73. Work with the federal government to support the dedicated delivery of public library services in Indigenous communities on reserve and develop local capacity within those communities. (2015: #56)

K-12 Education

74. Provide new funding to ensure that learning resources reflective of B.C. Indigenous peoples are developed and readily accessible for all grades and subject areas.

75. Provide adequate funding to support the educational mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations.

Social Services

76. Provide funding to expand and build capacity in existing childcare, and early intervention and child development programs to help meet the needs of Indigenous children and families in B.C., including those living on- and off-reserve.

77. Ensure that a coordinated, effective and transparent system is in place to address the over-incarceration of Indigenous peoples in B.C. and provide funding to the Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of BC and the Aboriginal Justice Council.

78. Increase support for housing for Indigenous peoples living in urban areas and provide funding for local community organizations such as local Friendship Houses.

THEME 9: SPORT, CULTURE AND ARTS

Arts and Culture Funding and Support

79. Increase provincial per capita funding to support the growing number of artists in B.C. and the vibrant creative economy, and provide increased, stable, multi-year funding for arts, culture and heritage organizations to promote, educate and support B.C.'s arts community. (2014: #47 and 2015: #53)

80. Ensure local communities can access provincial and federal funding to celebrate and promote Canada's 150th anniversary of confederation (sesquicentennial) celebrations in 2017.

81. Restore gaming grants to 2008 levels ($156 million from the current $134 million) and provide incremental increases as gaming revenues increase. (2014: #47 and 2015: #54)

Libraries

82. Provide inflation-adjusted funding increases to public libraries to enable them to sustain basic levels of service and consider additional increases to implement new innovations in service delivery.

Sport Funding

83. Consider additional funding for multi-sport and senior sports organizations to promote and increase professional performance and recreational participation in sports, as well as coaching services, education and development.

THEME 10: NATURAL RESOURCES

Agriculture and Agri-Food

84. Provide programs, policies and financial incentives to strengthen agriculture and the agri-foods sector, including: Food Policy Councils; farmer's market programs and infrastructure; financial assistance for farmers; incentives to modernize food and beverage production technologies; and the development of a food innovation centre. (2015: #45)

85. Strengthen agricultural practices around land use and focus on protection of the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Fisheries

86. Identify and develop creative opportunities to expand and maintain fish and seafood processing industries in coastal communities to maintain the viability of those communities with local jobs.

Forestry

87. Revitalize the forest industry and maximize job opportunities for British Columbians, including through strategic partnerships with First Nations and local communities.

88. Control and contain the current and growing spruce beetle infestation to prevent a repeat of the mountain pine beetle infestation.

Natural Resource Development and Operations

89. Ensure equitability in natural resource revenue-sharing models and make sure that future resource development results in increased benefits for communities.

90. Provide long-term predictable funding for Geoscience BC to enable future investments in energy development, as well as minerals and mining research.

91. Provide adequate resources to update current geological mapping and databases.

92. Ensure that budgets and staffing levels are allocated appropriately to ministries so they can effectively undertake their core responsibilities, including enforcement, related to the forestry, mining, energy and other natural resource sectors.

THEME 11: TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT

Accessible Transportation

93. Provide more affordable and accessible transportation options and services to persons with disabilities and seniors in urban and rural communities, including HandyDART and accessible taxis.

Active Transportation (Cycling and Walking)

94. Increase investment in active transportation (cycling and walking) in urban and rural communities, including infrastructure improvements and safety education, to promote healthy lifestyles and provide social, environmental and economic benefits. (2015: #58)

Public Transit

95. Ensure long-term, stable funding for transportation and public transit infrastructure improvements. (2014: #51 and 2015: #59, 60)

96. Commit to long-term funding of the U-Pass BC program beyond April, 2018, and end cyclical contract expiry by developing a long-term standardized and affordable U-Pass BC program indexed to inflation.

Transportation Infrastructure

97. Develop a coordinated approach with federal, provincial and municipal governments and port authorities for the management of inland and coastal ports, and alternative approaches for trade corridor and development of supply chain management outside of the current boundaries.

98. Increase investment in highway safety in rural areas, such as fencing, to limit vehicle collisions with wildlife or livestock.

THEME 12: PUBLIC SAFETY

Justice and Correctional Services

99. Provide funding and support for the development of correctional services and supports on Vancouver Island dedicated to women and youth.

100. Ensure that the minimum standards are met in relation to the operation and inspection of correctional facilities and implement the recommendations outlined by the B.C. Office of the Ombudsperson in a 2016 report[5].

Legal Aid

101. Provide increased, sustained and adequate funding for legal aid to ensure this service is available for those who need it, including women, families and those in restorative justice programs. (2014: #42 and 2015: #61)

102. Increase the tariff fee to create incentives for more legal aid services and review the current exemptions from the calculation of income for legal aid eligibility to ensure fairness.

[5] "Under Inspection: The Hiatus in BC Correctional Centre Inspections" (2016, available at: www.bcombudsperson.ca)

Appendix A: Public Hearing Witnesses

Brenda Leadlay, Alliance for Arts + Culture (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Alex McGowan, Alliance of BC Students (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Trevor Smith, Allied Golf Association of British Columbia (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
Kathleen Simpson, AMS of UBC Vancouver (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
John Leech, Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of BC (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Jon Tupper, Barry Till, Ruth Wittenburg, Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Gavin Dirom, Rick Conte, Association for Mineral Exploration British Columbia (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Sarah Muff, Joey Hansen, Association of Administrative and Professional Staff at UBC (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Jenny Benedict, Association of British Columbia Public Library Directors (5-Oct-16, Port Hardy)
Janet Morris-Reade, Association of Service Providers for Employability and Career Training (ASPECT BC) (5-Oct-16, Quesnel)
Tunya Audain (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Troy Halliday, BC Wildlife Federation, Lower Mainland (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Reg Ens, Rhonda Driediger, BC Agriculture Council (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Heather O'Hara, BC Association of Farmers' Markets (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Dan Baxter, BC Chamber of Commerce (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Dr. Jay Robinson, Liza Kallstrom, BC Chiropractic Association (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Dr. Rob Staschuk, Jocelyn Johnston, BC Dental Association (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Dr. Gurpreet Leekha, BC Doctors of Optometry (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Aaron Eckman, BC Federation of Labour (5-Oct-16, Port Hardy)
James Donaldson, Rick Gagner, BC Food Processors Association (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Fred Steele, Glen Lucas, BC Fruit Growers' Association (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Chuck Keeling, Shiera Stuart, Ernest Yee, BC Gaming Industry Association (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Simon Kelly, Megan Scott, Stephanie Smith, BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU) (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Thom O'Dell, BC Hazelnut Growers Association (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
Mary Collins, BC Healthy Living Alliance (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Kishone Roy, BC Non-Profit Housing Association (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Robert Lindstrom, Andreas Kammenos, BC Pulp and Paper Coalition (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Jordan Abney, BC School Sports (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Gordon Oates, BC Seniors Games Society (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Craig Daniell, BC SPCA (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
Dr. Chris MacBride, Sian Blythe, Pat Harris, BC Spinal Cord Injury Network (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Alan Martin, BC Wildlife Federation (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Brenton Froehlich, BC Wildlife Federation, Okanagan Region (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Gerald Paille, BC Wildlife Federation, Region 7B, Peace-Liard (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Denice Bardua, Tony Goulet, Lisa Kishkan, Board of Education, School District No. 28 (Quesnel) and Quesnel District Teachers' Association (5-Oct-16, Quesnel)
Debbie Tablotney, Board of Education, School District No. 38 (Richmond) (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
Mike Lombardi, Board of Education, School District No. 39 (Vancouver) (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Kerri Palmer Isaak, Board of Education, School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Chris Johns, Trina Ayling, Gail Brown, Patricia Whalen, Board of Education, School District No. 5 (Southeast Kootenay) (20-Sep-16, Cranbrook)
Tim Bennett, Allan Reed, Board of Education, School District No. 57 (Prince George) (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Rob Botterell (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)
Barb Steward, Lisa Scott, Zoe Kirk, Boundary Invasive Species Society, and Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Terry-Lynn Stone, Brain Injury Alliance (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
Jason Gordon, British Columbia Association for Child Development and Intervention (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Kevin Boon, British Columbia Cattlemen's Association (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
M.J. Whitemarsh, British Columbia Common Ground Alliance (11-Oct-16, Victoria)

Manley McLachlan, British Columbia Construction Association (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Richard Campbell, British Columbia Cycling Coalition (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Michael Olson, Simka Marshall, British Columbia Federation of Students (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Scott McDonald, British Columbia Lung Association (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Aven Poynter, British Columbia Pediatric Society (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
Kevin Reimer, British Columbia Principals' & Vice-Principals' Association (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Deanna Horn, Damian Stathonikos, British Columbia Real Estate Association (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Gordon Swan, British Columbia School Trustees Association (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
Glen Hansman, Dr. Sherri Brown, British Columbia Teachers' Federation (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
AJ Brown, Barbara M. Brown (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Ken Peacock, Business Council of British Columbia (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Al Morrison, Camosun College Faculty Association (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Michael Glover, Camosun College Student Society (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Anne Boyd, Kat Eddy, Campbell River Literacy Association (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)
Michael Welsh, Canadian Bar Association, British Columbia Branch (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Sandra Krueckl, Jenny Byford, Canadian Cancer Society, BC and Yukon (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Alex Hemingway, Iglika Ivanova, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, BC Office (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Serge Corbeil, Ellen Stensholt, Canadian Diabetes Association (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Beverley Gutray, Jonny Morris, Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Wendy Pattenden, Megan Lukan, Canadian Sport Institute Pacific (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Jordan Bateman, Canadian Taxpayers Federation (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Paul Faoro, Canadian Union of Public Employees, BC Division (5-Oct-16, Quesnel)
Ben Cardinal (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Harry Jennings, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Invasive Plant Committee (5-Oct-16, Quesnel)
Ken Carrusca, TJ Parhar, Cement Association of Canada (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Anna Hardy, Helmut Pastrick, Central 1 Credit Union (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Linda Trepanier, Central Okanagan Food Policy Council (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Dr. Heather Banham, Richard Rees, Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Darrell Roze, Child Development Centre of Prince George and District (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Dr. Tom Warshawski, Childhood Obesity Foundation (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Corinne Bomben, City of Prince Rupert (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
Paul Kariya, Clean Energy BC (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Dr. Richard Wiefelspuett, Clear Seas Centre for Responsible Marine Shipping (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Sharon Gregson, Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Rachelle McElroy, Coastal Invasive Species Committee (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
Steven Nycholet, Henry Reiser, College of New Caledonia (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Dianne Teslak, David Walls, College of the Rockies (20-Sep-16, Cranbrook)
Joan Kaun, College of the Rockies Faculty Association (20-Sep-16, Cranbrook)
Alana Murdoch, Penny Tees, Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy (West Kootenay-Boundary) (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Betty Knight, Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy (East Kootenay-Valemount) (20-Sep-16, Cranbrook)
Shawn Holland, Comox District Teachers' Association (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)
Shannon Aldinger, Katherine Tinmouth, Comox Valley Families for Public Education (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)
Heather Ney, Anne Davis, Comox Valley Transition Society (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)
Dr. Michael Conlon, Dr. Jim Johnson, Confederation of University Faculty Associations of British Columbia (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Thom Armstrong, Patty Shaw, Co-operative Housing Federation of BC (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Krista Thompson, Covenant House Vancouver (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Michele Mobley, Dawson Creek Literacy Now (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Fred Roberston, District of Port Hardy (5-Oct-16, Port Hardy)
Meredith Graham, Monique Paulino, Tracey Ho, Douglas Students' Union (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Elizabeth Model, Downtown Surrey Business Improvement Association (22-Sep-16, Surrey)

William Booth, Lucy Alderson, Suzanne Smythe, Downtown Eastside Adult Literacy Roundtable (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Todd Larsen, East Kootenay Invasive Species Council (20-Sep-16, Cranbrook)
Jeff Berdusco, East Kootenay Wildlife Association (20-Sep-16, Cranbrook)
Tracy Porteous, Ending Violence Association of BC (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Leslie Ann Wirth, Engage Sport North (5-Oct-16, Quesnel)
Carrie Bercic, Jennifer Stewart, Families Against Cuts to Education (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Rick FitzZaland, Federation of Community Social Services of BC (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Steven Jones, Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
Terri Van Steinburg, Federation of Post-Secondary Educators of BC (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Michael LeBourdois, First Nations Tax Commission (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
Launi Skinner, First West Credit Union (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Bev Vandersteen, Fort Nelson and District Chamber of Commerce (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Doug Stout, FortisBC (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Suzanne Gill, Pascal Spothelfer, Genome BC (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Robin Archdekin, Bas Brusche, Bruce Madu, Carlos Salas, Geoscience BC (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Dr. Mychael Gleeson (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Marko Dekovic, Global Container Terminals Canada (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Pierre Cenerelli, Melissa McGregor, Graduate Student Society at Simon Fraser University (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Al Hasham, Catherine Holt, Greater Victoria Chamber of Commerce (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Corey Burger, Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Dr. Enid Elliot, Jessica Hrechka Fee, Greater Victoria Regional Child Care Council (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Arthur Hadland (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
David Hawker, Leona Hawker (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Tahani Hejazi (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Erin O'Melinn, HUB Cycling (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Sebastien Charbonneau, Imperial Tobacco Canada Ltd. (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Annette Delaplace, Faith Bodnar, Yuji Kujiwara, Inclusion BC (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Colleen Giroux-Schmidt, Innergex Renewable Energy Inc. (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Aaron Sutherland, Mike Lee, Insurance Bureau of Canada (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Gail Wallin, Invasive Species Council of British Columbia (5-Oct-16, Quesnel)
Line Robert, Dallas Smith, Island Coastal Economic Trust (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)
Dr. W. Gord Bacon, Don Trethewey, Kamloops and District Fish and Game Association (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
Lori Marchand, Kathy Humphreys, Margaret Chrumka, Kamloops Art Gallery, Kamloops Symphony Society and Western Canada Theatre (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
David Johnson, Kamloops Brain Injury Association (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
Brent Hasanen, Joshua Knaak, Kamloops Chamber of Commerce (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
Tom Dyas, Kelowna Chamber of Commerce (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Gillian Dearle, Kwantlen Faculty Association (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Alex McGowan, Kwantlen Student Association (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
John Roscoe, Ladner Sediment Group (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Dr. Ian Humphreys, Viktor Sokha, Langara College (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Gail Chaddock-Costello, Langley Teachers' Association (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Mark Benton, Legal Services Society (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
Rebecca Beuschel, Literacy Quesnel Society (5-Oct-16, Quesnel)
Karin Litzcke (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Lisa McGuire, Manufacturing Safety Alliance of BC (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Bob Johnstone, Margie Hayward, Meadowbrook Community Association (20-Sep-16, Cranbrook)
Dr. Michael Mehta, Amie Schellenberg (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
Bryan Cox, Karina Brino, Mining Association of British Columbia (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Peter Leitch, Phil Klapwyck, Motion Picture Production Industry Association of British Columbia (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Chris Lewis, Steve Arnett, Mike Bonkowski, Nanaimo Youth Services Association (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Mayor Lori Ackerman, Colin Griffith, NEBC Resource Municipalities Coalition (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Peter Nelson (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)

Blair Qualey, New Car Dealers Association of BC (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Elizabeth Wilson, North Coast Literacy Now (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
John Bowman, North Island College (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)
Andrew Dalton, Tony Bellavia, North Island College Students' Union (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)
Douglas Jones, Will Lewis, Northern Brain Injury Association (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Terri O'Neill, Northwest Fish and Wildlife Conservation Association (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Isobel Mackenzie, Office of the Seniors Advocate (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)
Allan Coyle, Connie Denesiuk, Jim Hamilton, Okanagan College (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Helen Overnes, Oliver Women's Institute (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Scott Olson (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Brandon Yan, Out in Schools (26-Sep-16, Victoria)
Mark Angelo, Al Martin, Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia; BC Wildlife Federation (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Dr. George Eisler, Dr. Don Nixdorf, Pacific Academic Institute for Chiropractic (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Mariane Bourcheix-Laporte, Pacific Association of Artist Run Centres (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Daryl Luster, Pacific Hepatitis C Network (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Dr. Brian Riddell, Michael Meneer, Pacific Salmon Foundation (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Jared Kope, Jayne Chow-Olsen, PacificSport Fraser Valley (22-Sep-16, Surrey)
Carolynn Boomer, Linda Stride, PacificSport Interior BC (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
Shaunna Taylor, PacificSport Okanagan (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)
Drew Cooper, PacificSport Vancouver Island (5-Oct-16, Port Hardy)
Jodi Hawley, PacificSport Columbia Basin (20-Sep-16, Cranbrook)
Maggie Milne Martens, Amanda Hillis, Andrea Sinclair, Parent Advocacy Network for Public Education (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Jean Blake, Paddi Wood, Brian Wood, Parkinson Society British Columbia (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Hilary Crowley, Terry Fedorkiw, Physiotherapists for Northern Communities (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Jason Coolen, Kevin Evans, Physiotherapy Association of BC (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Robert Bettauer, Stacey Lund, PISE (Pacific Institute of Sport Excellence) (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Beverley Pomeroy (5-Oct-15, Port Hardy)
Sean Farrell, Prince George and District Community Arts Council (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Dave King, Prince George Back Country Recreation Society (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Christie Ray, Cindi Pohl, Lorna Wendling, Prince George Chamber of Commerce (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Joanne Hapke, Richard Giroday, Prince George District Teachers' Association (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Sharon Berringer, Gili Avrahami, Prince of Wales Mini School Parent Assistance Coordination Committee (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Raegen Sawka, Prince Rupert District Teachers' Union (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
Ken Veldman, Prince Rupert Port Authority (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
Ulf Kristiansen, Prince Rupert Unemployed Action Centre Society (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
Rod Bealing, Private Forest Landowners Association (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)
Heather Lindsay, Carey Newman, Professional Arts Alliance of Greater Victoria (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
John Winter, Prostate Cancer Canada (5-Oct-16, Port Hardy)
Dr. William Bruneau, Dr. Michael Zlotnik, Public Education Network Society (PENS) (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)
Harriet Permut, Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver (6-Oct-16, Delta)
Bill Newell, Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Jamie Cassels, Dr. Alan Davis, Dr. Lane Trotter, Research Universities' Council of BC, B.C. Association of Institutes and Universities, BC Colleges (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Greg Wilson, Retail Council of Canada (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Kelly Greene, Richmond Schools Stand United (4-Oct-16, Prince George)
Bill Barrable, Penny Clarke-Richardson, Rick Hansen Institute (21-Sep-16, Richmond)
Luanne Roth (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)
Dr. Allan Cahoon, Royal Roads University (11-Oct-16, Victoria)
Barry Delaney, Salmon Arm Savings and Credit Union (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)
Jean Leahy, Jim Collins, Save Our Northern Seniors (5-Oct-16, Quesnel)

Gabrielle Faludi, Zachery Bunting, Kavy James, Robin Legere, Zachary Crispin, Selkirk College Students' Union (26-Sep-16, Victoria)

Brian Smith, Shaun Hollingsworth, Seymour Salmonid Society (11-Oct-16, Victoria)

Christine Dyson, Arr Farah, Simon Fraser Student Society (22-Sep-16, Surrey)

Andrew Petter, Joanne Curry, Simon Fraser University (22-Sep-16, Surrey)

Dustin Snyder, Steve Hamilton, Spruce City Wildlife Association (4-Oct-16, Prince George)

Carol Meise, Dr. Rhonda Nelson, Starbright Children's Development Centre (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)

Meghann Pleasance, Megan Steele, Jane Campardo, Support Summerland Schools (26-Sep-16, Victoria)

Anita Huberman, Surrey Board of Trade (22-Sep-16, Surrey)

Cindy Dalglish, Surrey Students Now (22-Sep-16, Surrey)

Robin Tavender (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)

George Harvie, Neil Dubord, The Corporation of Delta (26-Sep-16, Victoria)

Geoff Sing, The Cridge Centre for the Family (11-Oct-16, Victoria)

Rhoda Witherly, Tammy Morin Nakashima, The Society of Notaries Public of British Columbia (4-Oct-16, Prince George)

Dr. Paul Dagg, Dr. Alan Shaver, Thompson Rivers University (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)

Dr. Thomas Friedman, Thompson Rivers University Faculty Association (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)

Leif Douglass, Cole Hickson, Amber Storvold, Nathan Lane, Thompson Rivers University Students' Union (20-Sep-16, Kamloops)

Mayor Shirley Ackland, Town of Port McNeill (5-Oct-16, Port Hardy)

Conrad Lewis, United Fisherman and Allied Workers' Union (26-Sep-16, Victoria)

Christina Nelson, Shelley Starr, June Astor, Rose Lincoln, Cecily Moore, United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union (3-Oct-16, Prince Rupert)

Dr. Philip Barker, Deborah Buszard, University of British Columbia, Okanagan Campus (21-Sep-16, Kelowna)

Robert Knight, Lynda Pattie, University of Northern British Columbia (4-Oct-16, Prince George)

Sean Parkinson, University of the Fraser Valley Faculty and Staff Association (22-Sep-16, Surrey)

Jamie Cassels, University of Victoria (11-Oct-16, Victoria)

Maxwell Nicholson, University of Victoria Students' Society (11-Oct-16, Victoria)

Ammar Mahimwalla, Lucille Pacey, Vancouver Biennale (5-Oct-16, Port Hardy)

Taryn Thomson, Karen Shortt, Vancouver Community College Faculty Association (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)

Morgane Oger, Vancouver District Parent Advisory Council (26-Sep-16, Victoria)

Gretchen Hartley, Terri Odeneal, Vancouver Island Federation of Hospices (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)

Shawn Gough, Vancouver Island North Teachers' Association (5-Oct-16, Port Hardy)

Kathleen Reed, Vancouver Island University Faculty Association (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)

Avery Bonner, Vancouver Island University Students' Union (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)

Brooke McLardy, Vernon Women's Transition House Society (26-Sep-16, Victoria)

Sheila Bouman, viaSport British Columbia (4-Oct-16, Prince George)

Casey Edge, Victoria Residential Builders Association (11-Oct-16, Victoria)

Michael Colclough, Roger Kishi, Wachiay Friendship Centre Society (6-Oct-16, Courtenay)

Dr. Katharine McKeen, Mike McLoughlin, Walk-In Clinics of BC Association, Victoria Division of Family Practice (11-Oct-16, Victoria)

Andrew Klukas, Western Convenience Stores Association (5-Oct-16, Quesnel)

Chris Kinch, YMCA of Northern BC (4-Oct-16, Prince George)

Dr. Daren Hancott, Yorkville University (19-Sep-16, Vancouver)

Appendix B: Written and Video Submissions

Robert Adair
Amit Sandhu, Ampri Group
S.B. Julian, Animal Defense and Anti-Vivisection Society of BC
Patti Nakatsu, Arthritis Research Canada
Brynn Bourke, BC Building Trades
Daniel Fontaine, BC Care Providers Association
David Stewart, BC Choral Federation & North Kootenay Lake Arts & Heritage Council
Craig Wightman, Deborah Gibson, BC Conservation Foundation
Byron McCorkell, Kelly Mann, BC Games Society
Rick Turner, BC Health Coalition
Barbara Kelly, BC Library Trustees Association
Trish Garner, BC Poverty Reduction Coalition
Erin Pritchard, Kate Feeney, BC Public Interest Advocacy Centre
Miles Prodan, BC Wine Institute
Laura Dixon, Board of Education, School District No. 37 (Delta)
Mike Murray, Board of Education, School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows)
Betty Baxter, Board of Education, School District No.46 (Sunshine Coast)
Helena Geske, Board of Education, School District No. 52 (Prince Rupert)
Erin Evans, Kevin Pobuda, Board of Education, School District No. 60 (Peace River North)
Susan Wilson, Board of Education, School District No. 72 (Campbell River)
Mona Hennenfent, BrainTrust Canada Association
Geraldine Vance, British Columbia Pharmacy Association
Grant Bryan
Tanya Davidson, Bulkley Valley Brain Injury Association
Aaron Busch
Shelley Howard, Campbell River Head Injury Support Society
Jim Goetz, Canadian Beverage Association
Iglika Ivanova, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
Mary Ellen Gabias, Canadian Federation of the Blind
Lorraine McLachlan, Canadian Franchise Association
Neil Moody, Canadian Homebuilders' Association of BC
Frank Swedlove, Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association
Grant Watson, Canadian Thoroughbred Horse Society
Jean Swanson, Carnegie Community Action Project
Nelson Chan
Vivian Tse, Chartered Professional Accountants of BC
Tana Millner, Child Development Centre Society of Fort St. John and District
Ted Schaffer, City of Langley
Alisa Thompson, City of Terrace
Sadhu Johnston, City of Vancouver
Adrienne Bakker, Sandra Krueckl, Scott McDonald, Clean Air Coalition of BC
Adrian Legin, Coastal Community Credit Union
Hamish Kassa, Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society
George Creek, Council of BC Yacht Clubs
Steve Kux, David Suzuki Foundation
Sonya Kupka, Dietitians of Canada
Kenneth Poon, Dr. Kenneth S Poon MD Inc.
Wayne Duzita
Arthur Entlick
Curt Gesch, Eskerhazy Farm and Publications
Robert L. (Bob) Fedderly
Adrienne Montani, First Call: BC Child & Youth Advocacy Coalition
R.I. (Bobbi) Fox
Carol Paetkau, Fraser Valley Brain Injury
Lynette Grants, Friends of Cypress Provincial Park Society
Anna Horianopoulos, Friendship House Association of Prince Rupert
Barbara Goodwin
Ian Black, Greater Vancouver Board of Trade
Kevin Murdoch, Greater Victoria Public Library
Shawn Groff
Keith Moore, Haida Gwaii Higher Education Society
Greg Halsey-Brandt
Karsten Henriksen
Helena Hiltz
Tara Houle
Matthew Ilich
Laurie Russell, Infant and Child Development Association of B.C.
Paul Gudaitis, Innovative Medicines Canada
Keith Isherwood
Kenneth Johnston
Chris Kapasky
Margaret Warcup, Kitimat Child Development Centre
Rick Koechl
Jody Burk, Kootenay Community Credit Union
Harlan Bradford, Kootenay Livestock Association
Marlyn Graziano, Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Kelly Longley, Lake View Credit Union
Kailey Erickson, Langley Literacy Network
Buddy Lee
Sue Senger, Lillooet Regional Invasive Species Society

Herbert Lee, LTA Holidays (Canada) Ltd.
Susan Chambers, Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Arts Council
Jason Etherington, Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Arts Council
Dawn Flanagan, Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Arts Council
Heather Shay, McBride Annex PAC
Mark Meiers
June Stockdale, Nelson Public Library
Gail Neufeld
Rob Howard, New Coast Lifestyles
Christine White, North Coast Transition Society
Carlene Duczek, North Okanagan Brain Injury Society
John Wong, Oak Residence Association
Tim Walters, Okanagan College Faculty Association
Jeremy McCall, Outdoor Recreation Council of British Columbia
Bernhard Nimmervoll, Parent Advisory Committee Edith Cavell Elementary School
Petronella (Nel) Peach
Evan Pearcy
Judith Walton, Pemberton and District Public Library
Errin Morrison, Port Moody Public Library
Deborah Dee, Powell River Brain Injury Society
Alison Hagreen, Prince George Brain Injured Group
Carolynne Burkholder-James, Prince George Public Library
Fern Carr, Project Literacy Kelowna
Jamie Myrah, Pulmonary Hypertension Association of Canada
George Edwards, Rafter K Ranch
Shanti Ang, READ Surrey White Rock Society
Henry Beh, Richmond Chinese Community Society
Harold Steves, Richmond City Council
Cory Parker, Richmond Firefighters Association
Simon Tang, Richmond Public Library Board
Valene Foster, Salmo Valley Public Library
Balwant S. Sanghera
Tara Tait, Seismic Safety for BC Schools
June Stewart, Shuswap Children's Association
Leah Sonne
Paul Devick, Southern Interior Weed Management Committee
Peter Stary
Deborah Heidebrecht, Sunshine Coast Community Services – Child Development Services
Catherine Disbery, suxkenxitelxkl chechamala Aboriginal Early Years Table
Marcia Smith, Teck Resources Limited
Neil Thompson
Cameron Bishop, Tilray Canada
Kukpi7 Fred Seymour, Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc (Kamloops Indian Band)
Jackie Hogan, Mark Evered, University of the Fraser Valley
Anne McMullin, Urban Development Institute
Bruce Sharpe, Vancouver Electric Vehicle Association
Sandra Singh, Vancouver Public Library
Louisa Russell, Hilla Kerner, Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter
Mick Collins, Victoria Golden Rods & Reels
Mike Nugent, Victoria Real Estate Board
Kendra Milne, West Coast LEAF
Danielle Armstrong, West Kootenay Brain Injury Association
Mary Jo Campbell, West Vancouver Memorial Library
Julia Whittaker
Colin Yip
Mark Frimpong, YMCAs and YWCAs in BC

Appendix C: Online Survey Respondents

Steve Abbott
Rod Akizuki
Virginia Allard
Catherine Alpha
Beverley Anderson
Erin Arnold
Shawn Aslani
Gili Avrahami
Tyler Bacon
Stefan Baer
Peter Baird
Janine Baker
Robert Baker
John Baldwin
Laurie Baldwin
Ian Ball
Joy Barrett
Sandy Bauer
Jon Beasley-Murray
Julie Beer
Talia Beltgens
Tim Benesh
Sherry Benko
Cynthia Bertelli
Dana Bertsch
Esther Berube
Joan Best
Anita Biamonte
Derek Bigham
Deborah Billwiller
Kevin Billy
Shira Biner
Andrea Bisaillon
Monika Bittel
Sydney Black
Colleen Blatz
Cheri Bojcic
Clifford Boldt
Tim Botham
Toni Botham
Jennifer Boulet
Shay Bowick
Katie Boyd
Landon Bradshaw
Ken Bramble
Jennifer Breau
Mel Brennan
Peter Brodie
Linda Brown
Lorel Brown
Michael Brown
Ross Brown
Thelma Brown
Chardaye Bueckert
Dianne Burditt
Guy Busato
Donna Bush
Jeannette Campbell
Richard Campbell
Laurie Carter
Megan Caskey
Yvon Chasse
Munro Chataway
Kathleen Cherry
Jackie Chow
Joyce Chow
Susan Chung
Teresa Claire
David Clarkson
John Conklin
Kathleen Connolly
John Cook
Genevieve Creighton
Bree Cropper
Sharon Crowley
Jacqueline Crummey
Stefanie Curtis
Alison Cutts
Tim Daniel
Valerie Dare
Eric Davidson
Bev Dawson
Chloe Deane
Pam December
Thomas Demarco
Faizel Desai
Jennifer Dickie
Renee Dickinson
Michelle Dodek
Peter Donkers
Rachel Dooley
Marty Douglas
Stephanie Dunn
A. Katherine Duperron
Jerimy Earl
Susan Ellard
Diana Elliott
Raeann English
Leanne Ewen
Carole Eyles
Shauna Farrell
Maxine Favell
Alexandra Fedorova
Sarah Ferguson
Lee Ferreira
Lisa Fisher
Gregory Foskett
Lizanne Foster
Rachel Fraser
Arlis French
Barbara French
Susan Fritz
Mabel Fung
Doris Gallas
Jane Gardiner
Rick Gee
David Gendron
Rebecca Georges
Sheena Gordon
Erin Grant
Ken Grant
Titus Gregory
Shawn Groff
Jo Gromadzki
Rilla Hallwood
Mike Hanafin
Kim Hancock
Laura Harp
Lois Harrie
Nicholas Harrington
Frank Harris
Scott Harrison
Barbara Heller
Mona Hennenfent
Justine Hodge
Margaret Hoffman
Cheryl Hofweber
Corinne Hohl
Richard Hoole
Christiane Hoppmann
Kai Hotson
Walter Hsieh
Ian Hunt
Galen Hutcheson
Melanie Hyde
Rod Isaac
Rick Jackson
Melody Jacobson
Sheila Jahraus
Hugh Jardine
Olivia Jaswal
Brian Jepsen
Jenny Judge
Heather Kauer
Jane-Ann Kay
Linda Kemp
Lorn Kennedy
Barb Kilburn
Brad Kilburn
Sherry Klepsch
Lisa Kongsdorf
Bette Kosmolak
Fran Kwiecien
Tanya Kyi
Lynda Lafleur
Tammy Lawrence
Kim Leary
Dreama Lee
Heather Lessard
John Leung
Mary Levitan
Katrina Ling
Robert Lipscombe
Robie Liscomb
Ken Little
David Livingstone
Mary Lock
Danny Lockwood
Richard Longman
Anders Lunde
Percie Ly
Marcia Macdonald
Sarah MacKinnon
Amanda Magee
Jillian Maguire
Jesse Malm
Jin Foong Malm
Sara Maloney

Toby Manson
Michelle Martin
Dasha Maslennikova
Annelaure Masson
Bettina Matzkuhn
June Maynard
Donald McClintock
Raine Mckay
Danielle McLean
Ken McLennan
Peter McLennan
Diane McNally
Reena Meijer Drees
Alan Mendes
Scott Miller
Bailey Misfeldt-Johnson
Phil Mittelstaedt
Adrienne Montani
Nadine Moore
Casey Mork
Katharine Morrison
Paige Morrison
Jeanie Morton
Catherine Mounsteven
Pam Munroe
Sally Nadison
Severine Nichols
Frieda Nietzel
Janise Nikolic
Tamie Nohr
John Michael Northcote
Rhonda Nowak
Kim Nowitsky
Amy Nuttall
Lorraine Nygaard
Penny Ogasawara

Terry Oh
Miranda Orth
Ronald S. Osborne
Tanya Osolin
Jhenifer Pabillano
Jean-Francois Packwood
Ryan Painter
Marisa Paitson
Leigh Anne Palmer
Barbara Parkin
Niovi Patsicakis
Kate Pattison
Nicole Penner-Horodyski
Clarice Perkins
David Phillips
Karen Pighin
Marcel Pitre
Jeremy Plotkin
Suzanne Plourde
Ken Ponton
Patricia Porter
Carol Potasnyk
Gilles Poulin-Denis
Nancy Quinn
Don Radford
Ursula Raney Taylor
Nathan Read
Gosia Regdos
Lawren Richards
Rachel Richardson
Gizelle River
Clint Robertson
Ron Robinson
Donna Robson
John Rohwer
Cameron Rowe

Lori Rozali
Kristie Ruf
Nancy Ryan
Natasha Sanders-Kay
Chen Saraf
Madeleine Sauvé
Bridget Savereux
Helen Sawchuk
Bryce Schaufelberger
Linda Schmidt
Diana Schroeder
Bernd Schwericke
Lise Scollie
Janet Segat
Bernadette Semilla
Kara Serenius
Tamara Shand
Patty Shaw
Heather Shay
Don Sherrah
Andrea Sinclair
Jodie Siu
Brian Smyth
John Sovereign
Bob Spiers
Krissi Spinoza
Kristina Spring
Tracy Spring
Albert Springer
Andree St. Martin
Lisa Steacy
Fred Steele
Samuel Steele
Jacqueline Steffen
Miles Steininger
Sheryl Stendal

Morgan Stevenson
Jennifer Stewart
June Stewart
Mackenzie Stonehocker
Sue Stroud
Orla Sturgess
Doug Super
Justine Swanson
Gerald Swift
Pei Tan
Ronda Taylor
Melanie Thompson
Darlene Toews
Q Tomlinson
Enrique Torres
Sandra Townsend
Amelia Valmorbida
Charles van de Kamp
Theresa Vatrt
Hilary Villeneuve
Elaine Watts
Kim Werker
Gregory West
Randi West
George Westinghouse
Jennifer Whiteside
Nathan Wilkes
Michele Williams
Nikki Wilson
Karen Wonders
Kate Wong
Joy Wood
Nana Yenson
Tracy Yuen
Melissa Zazelenchuk
David Zeibin